Introduction to Gender and Sexuality Studies

WGS 10000/Section 22 North Building C107 Mondays and Thursdays 8.30am - 9.45am

Instructor: Michael L. J. Greer, she/her

Email: mgreer@gradcenter.cuny.edu

Office hours: Thursdays 10am – 11am

(in person **Hunter West 1738**) or by appointment (Zoom).

Course Grading	
Office Hours Requirement	5%
Cultural Artifact Assignment	10%
Pop Quizzes	20%
Final Exam	25%
Journal Entries	40%

Click here to book office hours: https://calendly.com/mljgreer/wgs-10000-office-hours

Course Description

This course introduces students to gender and sexuality studies, especially focusing on gender and sexuality as categories of analysis, with emphasis on the way these systems intersect with race, class, embodiment, nationality, and so on. We will excavate key concepts through exposure to an array of disciplines including the social sciences, history, philosophy, literature, film, legal studies, and popular writing. Students will be exposed to fundamental WGS theoretical problems, paradigms, arguments, and political strategies. All sorts of writing have historically been a vehicle for liberatory elucidation, communication, and documentation. Our course will embody this spirit by taking the power of writing for fueling and cultivating critical thought very seriously. Through our weekly guided journals, we will write to think and write to learn.

Course Format and Expectations:

This course will meet on Mondays and Thursdays in **North Building C107** from 8.30am - 9.45am.

Attendance is expected: in-class participation, it will be hard for you to do well if you miss too much class. If you must miss class, I expect you to email me before class begins.

Course Overview

The course is divided into eight topics, with each topic guided by several questions integral to gender and sexuality studies. For full lists of readings, assignments, and due dates, see the Course Schedule which can be found on BB. The topics and guiding questions are as such:

Topic	Weeks	Guiding Questions
Getting to know each other	Week 1: Th 1/25	What will we be learning this semester?
Getting Situated: Gender and Standpoint	Week 2: M 1/29 Th 2/1	How does lived experience serve as an important academic tool? How is gender "socially constructed"? If gender were performance, what political implications might that have for cis-people? For trans-people? How does gendered oppression impact what you know? How has your own viewpoint been shaped by your positionality? How might our lived experience limit us as academics interested in social change?

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		What is the difference between the additive view of identity and the intersectional view
	Week 3:	of identity?
Multiple	M 2/5	What are examples of the differences between structural, political, and
Oppressions	Th 2/8	representational intersectionality?
		Is anyone the "most" oppressed?
		What is "world-traveling"? Is anyone able to "world-travel"?
"Well-Meaning"		What is Mariana Ortega's Critique of white feminism?
White and	Week 4:	Who is Lila Abu-Lughod's audience?
Colonial	M 2/12	What are the potential harms of doing feminism from an ignorant standpoint?
Feminism	Th 2/15	
Informal	Week 5:	College closed and Michael is away for a conference.
Reading Week	M 2/19	
	Th 2/22	Take this week to read <i>Women, Race, and Class</i> .
	Week 6:	What is ideology critique and what does it have to do with Marxism?
	M 2/26	What are some myths that Davis debunks, and what is the truth behind them?
	W 2/28	How do we see racist, sexist, and classist ideological myths play out in our everyday lives
Momon	Th 2/29	and the culture that surrounds us?
Women, Race, and Class	Week 7:	Can class, race, and gender be separated as categories of analysis?
Nace, and Class	M 3/4	Why is feminist activism not linear?
	Th 3/7	How should we respond to sexual violence? To sex work?
		How has the feminist movement been plagued by racism?
		How should we think about abortion?
	Week 8:	What is afropessimism?
U.S. Feminist	M 3/11	What is the hidden transcript, public transcript, and the archive?
Politics in the	Th 3/14	What is potentially problematic about White empathy?
Wake of the		What place do joy, aliveness, and care have in theorizing oppression?
Transatlantic	Week 9:	What is sex positivity, and what is sex negativity?
Slave Trade	M 3/18	How can we avoid the trap of making spectacles out of black pain?
	Th 3/21	non san no a on a no a op or manno operation out or a nam pann
	Week 10:	
	M 3/25	How does Foucault help us understand oppression?
	Th 3/28	
		In what ways are bodies, emotions, practices, and habits enforced, and by whom/what?
	Week 11:	Is femininity bad? Is masculinity bad?
Disciplining		
Bodies	M 4/1 Th 4/4	What does shame have to do with patriarchy?
	1114/4	
		Is all disciplining wrong? How should we negotiate the problematic discourses we find
		ourselves in?
	Week 12:	Miles are those "good bodies" and "bod bodies"? Here the state of the left of the state of the s
	M 4/8	Why are there "good bodies" and "bad bodies"? How should we think about this?
	Th 4/11	
Critiques of Intersectionality		How can we make sense of Maria Lugones' and Selamawit Terrefe's disagreement about
	Week 13:	the value and role of intersectionality in revolutionary praxis?
	M 4/15	
	Th 4/18	What is Jennifer Nash's critique of intersectionality?
	M 4/22	
Spring Break	Th 4/25	
	M 4/29	
		Spring Break

Resistance Strategies		What does liberatory organizing look like? Is theory an important part of social justice movement building? How can we resist oppression?
Final Examination	Th 5/16	N/A

Learning Objectives

This course has three main learning objectives:

- (1) To give you a foundation in gender and sexuality studies so that you may confidently engage with issues to do with social oppression, identity, and liberation outside of the classroom.
 - (a) This includes equipping you with core concepts, analytic frames, and theories, and showing you how to apply them to historical events, life experiences, and cultural artifacts.
- (2) To help you develop your stances, ideas, and imaginations around social justice issues to do with gender and sexuality.
- (3) To develop your general argumentation and communication skills. This learning objective may be partitioned into smaller goals. You will practice:
 - (a) presenting the ideas and arguments of others in your own words,
 - (b) your reading comprehension skills,
 - (c) distinguishing the thesis of an argument from the reasons and evidence that supports it,
 - (d) critically examining arguments (testing consistency among claims, testing limits, or testing capacity to address a relevant issue or problem),
 - (e) interrogating the weaknesses of your own view and the strengths of alternative views,
 - (f) formulating original arguments and foreseeing (and responding to) strong objections,
 - (g) comparing different ideas and arguments presented in different texts.

Assignments, Grading, and Attendance

Weekly Guided Journal:

<u>Collectively, these are worth 40% of your overall grade.</u> This assignment works asks you to free-write journal in response to that week's prompt(s).

<u>Graded:</u> P/F. You will pass as long as you show substantial, good-faith genuine engagement with the course content. Instructions <u>hyperlinked</u> or on BB under "Assignments."

Due: Thursday of most weeks (see course schedule)

Pop-Quizzes

<u>Collectively, these are worth 20% of your overall grade.</u> I will administer short pop-quizzes throughout the semester to test that you have been doing the reading.

Cultural Artifact Assignment

This is worth 10% of your overall grade. On the first day of the semester, I will ask you to sign up for a day where you will present on a cultural artifact that relates in some way to one of that day's readings. It can be a song, movie, piece of art, meme, tweet, place, poem, book, TV show, celebrity.... The list is endless. You must post information, a "précis" on BB about your chosen artifact the night before the class you are presenting it. You may find more details about this assignment hyperlinked or on BB under "Assignments".

Office Hours Requirement

This is worth 5% of your overall grade and is pass/fail. In order to pass this requirement, you must meet with me in my office hours, at least once, before March 18th 2024. Office hours are on the first page of this syllabus. You may book with me here: https://calendly.com/mligreer/wgs-10000-office-hours

Final Examination:

<u>This is worth 25% of your overall grade.</u> I will release a question. guide in advance. More information will be released later in the semester.

Extra credit

To receive extra credit, you must email me a one page, double-spaced response to one of the optional readings. Your reading response must consider the pedagogical value of the reading: I want you to reflect on why I assigned this text in conjunction with the other texts I assigned that week. What does it add to the topic or issue that we discussed that week? Extra credit reading responses will not be accepted until after we've finished reading the material for the relevant week. Completing a response will allow me to add one percentage point to your overall grade.

Course Grading

Office Hours Requirement	5%
Cultural Artifact Assignment	10%
Pop Quizzes	20%
Final Exam	25%
Journal Entries	40%

Attendance and participation

Attendance at all classes and discussion sections is expected. Attendance will be taken. Significant unexcused absences can lower your final grade by up to a full letter grade. Participation in class discussions and activities is strongly encouraged. Active, engaged, and constructive participation can raise your final grade by up to half a letter grade. Note that there will be a variety of opportunities to participate actively: not all of them will involve speaking up in class.

Required Texts

Most of the required reading for the course will be available in electronic form on the class Blackboard site. Texts you must purchase:

- (1) Angela Y. Davis, *Women, Race & Class*: https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/37354/women-race-and-class-by-angela-y-davis/
- (2) I am asking you to watch the film *Losing Ground* as one of our mandatory texts (should be around \$5 on <u>Vudu</u>). I encourage you to find people in class to watch this with so you can save money and build community!
- (3) We will be watching one more film (TBD-Based on class vote) later in the semester. You may need to purchase this film, too.

Communications, Blackboard, and Expectations

We will use Blackboard:

- 1. To find and download our readings, assignment instructions, extra resources, and materials we cover in class: Most readings will be made available to you. Please print them out before class or bring them on a laptop or tablet (not a phone). I expect you to bring a copy of the reading to class with you.
- 2. To submit your journal entries.
- 3. To submit your cultural artifact *précis* the night before you present it.
- 4. For important announcements. See "Announcements" tab on BB.

I will mostly be in touch with you via email, however I will repeat important announcements on BB. I will send out an intro questionnaire google form in the first week of class. Make sure you fill out the intro questionnaire with your preferred email address, as that is how I will usually contact the class. I will take your phone number at the end of our first class but will only use it if I am having trouble getting in touch with you via email.

Expectations I have of you

- Read the assigned text(s), watch assigned movie or video, listen to assigned audio
- Attend class with a copy of the texts in tow (either printed out, on your laptop, or on a tablet)
- Check your email regularly for updates (please make sure you have proper access to it, and that you give me the correct email address in the intro questionnaire).
- Due dates are calculated by EST assignments are due by midnight EST on the date.
- If and when issues arise (be they technical or personal) that interfere with your studies, communicate with me as soon as possible. I am happy to make any necessary accommodations and work with you.
- This is an inclusive space for all students, and absolutely no discrimination in any form will be tolerated. If you ever feel uncomfortable or unsafe throughout the course, please let me know via email or in office hours. I am not a mandated reporter.
- Plagiarism is unacceptable. I would rather grant an extension than receive plagiarized work. If you find that you need more time to complete an assignment, *please talk to me*. If you are wondering whether something counts as plagiarism, see the handout (on Blackboard). If you are still unsure, feel free to ask me!
- Email me a picture of a cat if you've read carefully enough to notice this.
- I have a "two-strike" policy. The first time any work is plagiarized, I will fail the assignment. The second time I will bring the matter to the office of academic integrity and recommend course failure no exceptions and no questions asked.

Expectations you may have of me

- My office hours are 10am 11am on Thursdays after class in person in **Hunter West 1738** or by appointment (Zoom). You can sign up for a slot here: https://calendly.com/mljgreer/wgs-10000-office-hours
- Note: I require that you attend my office hours at least once before March 18th so start thinking about when you're going to sign up!
- The best way to reach me is via email (mgreer@gradcenter.cuny.edu). I generally respond to emails within 24 hours during the week, but I do not check my emails over the weekend. I will respond to emails sent over the weekend on Mondays.
- The Department of Women and Gender Studies at Hunter College affirms all forms of gender expression and identity. If you prefer to be called a different name than the name listed on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct me and others on your gender pronoun and let me know if it changes during the semester.

Health and well-being

University life can be challenging, and I understand that your physical and mental health may be impacted. If you feel that you are struggling, please reach out to me and we can work something out. I list some mental health resources below.

Lateness and absences

Try to arrive to class on time. This respects other students' time as well as mine. Saying that, I would rather you come late than not at all.

If you cannot make it to class, <u>please email me before class letting me know</u>. If you are having consistent trouble making it to class and want to talk to me about your progress, send me an email or come to my office hours.

If you test positive for COVID-19 or are otherwise ill but want to attend class, I can make our classroom hybrid-accessible. Please email me for details.

Technology Support

If you need help accessing Blackboard or your email, you can get in touch with the Hunter College Help Desk (212.772.4357). More info here: https://hunter.cuny.edu/information-technology/support/help-desk/

CUNY Rules, Regulations, and Services

Hunter College Policy on Sexual Misconduct

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

a. Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).

b. All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct Link: http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/la/Policy-on-Sexual-Misconduct-12-1-14-with-links.pdf"

Accessibility

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: In compliance with the ADA and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational access and accommodations for all its registered students. Hunter College's students with disabilities and medical conditions are encouraged to register with the Office of accessibility for assistance and accommodation. For information and appointment contact the Office of accessibility located in Room E1214 or call (212) 772-4857 /or VRS (646) 755-3129. You may also visit this website for more info: https://hunter.cuny.edu/students/health-wellness/accessibility/

Note: I assume that all of us learn in different ways and live in very different circumstances. I understand that the organization of any course will accommodate each student differently. For example, you may prefer to process information by speaking and listening, or you might prefer to articulate ideas via email or chat/discussion/comments. While I hope that you will all engage and participate generously, please talk to me as soon as you can about your individual learning needs and how this course can best accommodate them. (Credit to <u>Jessie Male</u>). Your access to our class matters to me—matters a lot. While I work hard to make our class accessible, I understand that you may have access needs I have not addressed. Access is an ongoing process. Please meet with me to discuss your access needs.

Plagiarism

The faculty and administration of Hunter College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both.

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures

While I can see how ChatGPT might well be a useful academic and educational tool, I do not accept work written by ChatGPT in this class.

The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Hunter College procedure for policy implementation can be found at https://hunter.cuny.edu/students/student-affairs/office-of-student-conduct/policies-and-forms/. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation. Students should be aware that faculty may use plagiarism detection software.

Nonattendance because of religious beliefs

NY State Education Law provides that:

- (1) Any student in an institution of higher education who is unable, because of their religious beliefs, to attend classes on a particular day or days shall, because of such absence on the particular day or days, be excused from any examination or any study or work requirements.
- (2) It shall be the responsibility of the faculty to make available to each student who is absent from school, because of religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements which they may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days.

Any student who is aggrieved by the alleged failure of any faculty or administrative officials to comply in good faith shall be entitled to maintain action or proceeding in the supreme court of the county in which such institution of higher education is located for the enforcement of their rights.

Local and National Mental Health Resources

- Hunter College offers free and confidential short-term counseling services to all Hunter College students. <u>Hunter College Personal Counseling Services</u>: Room 1119B, East Building 695 Park Ave. New York, NY 10065. 212-772-4931 or email personal counseling @hunter.cuny.edu
- Suicide Prevention:
 - CUNY Crisis Text Line: CUNY students can text "CUNY" to 741741 to initiate a free and confidential conversation with a trained volunteer and receive a referral for further help if necessary.
 - o National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988 (1.800.273.8255)
- Safe Horizon 24/7 Domestic Violence Hotline: 1.800.621.4673
- Safe Horizon 24/7 Rape and Sexual Assault Hotline: 1.212.227.3000
- Samaritans 24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 212.673.3000
- Trans Lifeline: 877.565.8860
- NYC Anti-Violence Project English/Spanish hotline: 212.714.1141 (AVP empowers lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and HIV-affected communities, and allies to end all forms of violence through organizing and education and supports survivors through counseling and advocacy.)

Course Schedule WGS 10000, Spring 2024 Instructor: Michael L. J. Greer, she/her mgreer@gradcenter.cuny.edu

Important Dates to Keep in Mind

January 24th – Last day to <u>drop</u> for 100% tuition refund
January 31st – Last day to <u>add</u> a course
May 6th – pass/no credit request period ends
May 15th – Last to withdraw with W
May 16th – 22nd – Final exam week
May 22nd – End of Semester

Topic	Week	Text	Assignment
Getting to know each other	Week 1	In Class: Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle The Master's House" (1984) (3 pages)	
	Week 2	Monday 1/29 (1) Read: "Gender Trouble on Mother's Day" by Jordy Rosenberg (online) (2) Read: Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" (1988) (12 pages) (3) Anne Fausto-Sterling, "How to Build a Man" (1997) (5 pages)	Thursday 2/1: Journal Entry due (BB)
Getting Situated: Gender and Standpoint		Thursday 2/1: (1) Read: The Combahee River Collective, "A Black Feminist Statement" (1977) (7 pages) (2) Nancy Hartsock, "The feminist standpoint: towards a specifically feminist historical materialism" (1997) (9 pages) (3) Listen to: Identity matters: Standpoint epistemology with Briana Toole (25 mins)	

Multiple Oppressions	Week 3	Monday 2/5: (1) Read: Selections, Kimberle Crenshaw (July 1991). "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color" (1991) (59 pages) (2) Watch: There is no hierarchy of oppressions, Audre Lorde (youtube video) Thursday 2/8: (1) Read: Maria Lugones, "Playfulness, World-Traveling, and Loving Perception" (Originally published in 1987) (25 pages) Optional: Marilyn Frye, "In and Out of Harm's Way: Arrogance and Love," (1983) (29 pages)	Thursday 2/8: Journal Entry due (BB)
"Well-Meaning" White and Colonial Feminism	Week 4	Monday 2/12: College Closed. Thursday 2/15: (1) Read: Mariana Ortega, "Being Lovingly, Knowingly Ignorant: White Feminism and Women of Color" (2006) (20 pages) (2) Read: Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others" (2002) (8 Pages)	Thursday 2/15: Journal Entry due (BB)
Informal Reading Week Make sure to read Women, Race, and Class for next week!	Week 5	Monday 2/19: College Closed Thursday2/22: Michael is away for a conference	Thursday 2/22: Journal Entry due (BB)
Women,	Week 6	Angela Y. Davis, Women, Race, and Class (1981) Monday 2/26: Chapters 1, 2, & 3 Wednesday 2/28 (classes follow a Monday schedule): Chapters 4, 5, & 6 Thursday 2/29: Chapters 7, 8, & 9	Thursday 2/29: Journal Entry due (BB)
and Class	Week 7	Angela Y. Davis, Women, Race, and Class (1981) Monday 3/4: Chapters 11 & 12 Optional: Amia Srinivisan, "Sex, Carceralism, Capitalism" (2021) Optional: Tia Lessin & Emma Pildes The Janes (2022 Documentary) Thursday 3/7: Chapters 10 & 13	Thursday 3/7: Journal Entry due (BB)

U.S. Feminist Politics in the Wake of the Transatlantic Slave Trade	Week 8	Monday 3/11: (1) Read: Hortense, Spillers. "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe." (1987) (18 pages) Optional: Saidiya Hartman. "The belly of the world: A note on Black women's labors." Souls 18, no. 1 (2016) (9 pages) Thursday 3/14: (1) Read: Saidiya Hartman, Chapter 1 from Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America (1997) Optional: Saidiya Hartman. "Venus in two acts." (2008)	Thursday 3/14: Journal Entry due (BB)
	Week 9	Monday 3/18: (1) Watch: Losing Ground (1982), Kathleen Collins (2) Read: L. H. Stallings, "'Redemptive Softness': Interiority, Intellect, and Black Women's Ecstasy in Kathleen Collins's Losing Ground" (2011) (16 pages) Thursday 3/21: (1) Read: Saidiya Hartman, Notes on Method and Selection from Book 1 of Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Riotous Black Girls, Troublesome Women, and Queer Radicals (2019)	Monday 3/18: You must meet with me by this date to get credit for your office hours requirement! Thursday 3/21: Journal Entry due (BB)
Disciplining Bodies	Week 10	Monday 3/21: (1) Read: Sandra Bartky, "Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power" (1982) (23 pages) Optional: Foucault, "The Subject and Power" (1982) Thursday 3/28: (1) Read: Bonnie Mann, "Femininity, Shame, and Redemption" (2018) (15 pages)	Thursday 3/28: Journal Entry due (BB)
	Week 11	Monday 4/1: (1) Read: Dean Spade, "Mutilating Gender" (2006) (15 pages) (2) Andrea Long Chu, "My New Vagina Won't Make Me Happy and it Shouldn't Have To," in The New York Times	Thursday 4/4: Journal Entry due (BB) Send Michael movie suggestions for 5/6 class!

	Week 12	Thursday 4/4: (1) Read: Samantha Murray, "(Un/Be)Coming Out? Rethinking Fat Politics" (2006) (12 pages) (2) Read: S. Bear Bergman, "Part-Time Fatso" (2009) (4 pages) Monday 4/8: (1) Read: Alexander, M. Jacqui. "Transnationalism, Sexuality, and the State" (2006) (25 pages) Thursday 4/11: (1) Selections, Jasbir K. Puar The right to maim: Debility, capacity, disability. (2017)	Thursday 4/11: Journal Entry due (BB) Class votes on movie to watch for Monday 5/6 class.
Critiques of Intersectionality	Week 13	Monday 4/15: Read: Maria Lugones, "Radical Multiculturalism and Women of Color Feminisms" (2014) (13 pages) Optional: Jennifer Nash, "A Love Letter from a Critic, or Notes on the Intersectionality Wars" (2019) Online Article Thursday 4/18: Read: Selamawit D. Terrefe "The Pornotrope of Decolonial Feminism" (32 pages) (2020)	Thursday 4/18: Journal Entry due (BB)
Spring Break	Week 14	Monday 4/22, Thursday 4/25, Monday 4/29	No Journal Entry due
Resistance Strategies	Week 15 Week 16	Thursday 5/2: (1) Read: bell hooks, "Theory as Liberatory Practice" (17 pages) (1994) Monday 5/6: (1) Class vote: Watch a film about feminist resistance strategies. E.g., Chiraq, Women Talking Thursday 5/9: (1) Read: Selection, Mariame Kaba, We Do This 'Til We Free Us: Abolitionist Organizing and Transforming Justice (2021) Monday 5/13: (1) Read: Chéla Sandoval, "Feminist Forms of Agency and Oppositional Consciousness: U.S. Third World Feminist Criticism" (1995) (18 pages)	Thursday 5/2: Journal Entry due (BB) Thursday 5/9: Journal Entry due (BB) No Journal Entry due
Final Examination		Thursday 5/16: Final Examination	