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## **CPED 574: Body Politics**

Time & Day: 6/15 & 16, /2019, Saturday and Sunday, 9:00AM-5:00PM

Place: York 107

Instructor: Teresa McDowell, Ed.D.

Office hours: Call CPSY office 503-768-6060 to schedule an appointment

Contact Information: [teresamc@lclark.edu](mailto:teresamc@lclark.edu)

### CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

Considers the relationship between body and power in global consumer cultures, the gendering and objectification of bodies, and the commodification of bodies in looksist societies. Raising awareness of body politics in the counseling process is reviewed to promote individual and relational wellbeing

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is required for completion of the L&C Eating Disorders Certificate. L&C students may also take the course as an elective. The class focuses on the impact of body politics on our everyday lives, including: the processes of privilege and oppression associated with the social construction of ideal bodies; the social control and self-policing of our physical selves; and role of power in physical aspects of relationships. Class time will be spent in a variety of activities including brief lectures, group discussion, role-plays, and other forms of engaged learning.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

1. Gain a better understanding of how looks, body size, race, age, abilities, and gender politics impact relationship to self, intimate partners, families, and social relationships;
2. Raise awareness of contextual self-of-the-counselor in relationship to our own bodies and the impact of our biases on therapeutic processes;
3. Develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between body politics and disordered eating, and
4. Practice using at least one method for raising critical awareness around bodies

and power with clients in therapy.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### **Class Preparation**

Participants are expected to complete the assigned readings and to synthesize and apply them in class. Classroom discussions are an opportunity to bring up questions about the assigned readings, deepen one's understanding of the issues under study, and integrate course material with one's own personal and professional experience. **(20 points)**

### **“The Story of My Body” Interview and Paper**

Class participants will work in pairs to practice asking others about their experiences relative to body politics. After class, each participant will continue to work on their own to develop a critical understanding of their experience relative to their body, privilege, power, oppression, and marginalization. Participants are to complete a 5 to 8 double-spaced page paper describing their experience, addressing the following questions **(10 points each = 80 points, DUE 6/26/17)**:

1. Describe the context in which you grew up. Describe the power dynamics in this setting. Include physical environment, cultural and racial context, social class, etc.
2. Describe your family dynamics in general and then relative to power and bodies. How did things like looks, body size, abilities, and skin tone play out in family dynamics?
3. Describe the home in which you lived relative to access to food and eating relative to power in and out of the family. For example, who ate first, who had the right to eat more, who's eating was being watched, etc. What messages did you get about eating and your body?
4. Describe your experiences outside the family – at school, extended family, and community relative to your body.
5. How safe did you feel in these various contexts? How did you feel about your body at various ages from early memories to present? How did/do important others feel/think about your body?
6. Describe the impact of your body experiences on dating, education, career, and other important aspects of your adult life.
7. How did dominant discourses about body size, beauty, masculinity/femininity, abilities, athleticism, skin tone, etc. affect your family and other important relationships? In what ways did you and/or your family members participate in the oppression or marginalization of others relative to body politics? How were you and/or your family members oppressed and/or marginalized?
8. Reflect on the impact of your experience may have on your work as a counselor/therapist. What steps do you need to take in this area to be prepared to

work with clients struggling with body image and/or disordered eating?

**Note:** Please disclose only what you feel comfortable talking about in the class setting. Many of us have experienced body trauma. Understanding your reactions to this topic will help you be a better therapist/counselor, however, it is up to you what you share and don't share and/or think about. If you need assistance, please let the instructor know.

GRADING A =93-100 A- = 90-92 B+ = 88-89 B =83-87 C=73-77 B- = 80-82 C- = 70-72 C+ = 78-79

***Late assignments will be graded down 5 points per day.***

#### NONDISCRIMINATION

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#### DISABILITY SERVICES STATEMENT

If you have a disability that may impact your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Student Support Services Office in the Albany Quadrangle (503-768-7192). After you have submitted documentation and filled out paperwork there for the current semester requesting accommodations, staff in that office will notify me of the accommodations for which you are eligible.

COURSE SCHEDULE & READINGS		
DATE/TIME	TOPICS	READINGS
Day 1 AM	Body Politics Overview  Bodies in socio-political	Carolan, M. (2015). The conspicuous body: Capitalism, consumerism, class and consumption. <i>Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture &amp; Ecology</i> , 9 (1) p82-111. (L&C Library)
Day 1 PM	Context: The impact of Capitalism, Patriarchy and Democracy  Men and muscularity  Embodied Power Dynamics, Privilege, and Oppression: Looks, Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Social Class, Abilities, and Age  The Cultural Politics of Body Size and Looks: Cases in Point  Body Story Interviews in dyads	Gremillion, H. (2005). The cultural politics of body size. <i>Annual Review of Anthropology</i> , (34), 13-32. doi: 10.1146/annurev.anthro.33.070203.143814 (on-line <a href="http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev.anthro.33.070203.143814">http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev.anthro.33.070203.143814</a> )  Hopkins, P. (2012). Everyday politics of fat. <i>Antipode</i> , 44(4),1227–1246. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8330.2011.00962.x (L&C Library)  Magallares, A. (2013). Masculinity, drive for muscularity and eating concerns in men. <i>Suma Psicológica</i> , 20(1), 83-88. (L&C Library) /article/viewArticle/nicholas/215)
Day 2, AM	Critical Geography of Bodies: Structural Violence, Trauma, and Relational Inequity	Brown, C., Weber, S. & Ali, S. 2008. Women’s body talk: A feminist Narrative approach. <i>Journal of Systemic Therapies</i> , 27(2), 2008, 92–104. (L&C Library)
Day 2 PM	Women’s bodies and health  Application to Eating Disorders and General Clinical Practice  How to Talk About Bodies in Therapy	Chrisler, J. (2014). A reproductive justice approach to women’s health. <i>Analyses of social Issues &amp; Public Policy</i> , 14(1), 205-209. DOI: 10.1111/asap.12056  Norsigian, J. (2019). Our bodies ourselves and the women’s health movement in the United States: Some reflections. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> , 109(6) 844-846. DOI: 10.2105/AJPH.2019.305059 (L&C library)

		Nicholas, J. (2008). Hunger politics: Towards seeing voluntary self-starvation as an act of resistance. <i>Third Space: A Journal of Feminist Theory and Culture</i> , 8(1). (on-line: <a href="http://journals.sfu.ca/thirdspace/index.php/journal/article/viewArticle/nicholas/215">http://journals.sfu.ca/thirdspace/index.php/journal/article/viewArticle/nicholas/215</a> )
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#### SUGGESTED FUTURE READINGS

Berry, B. (2007) *Beauty bias: Discrimination and Social Power*. Praeger. ISBN-10: 0275990125

Berry, B. (2017) *The Power of Looks: Social Stratification of Physical Appearance*. Routledge. ISBN- 10: 0754647587

Rhode, D. (2011). *The Beauty Bias: The Injustice of Appearance in Life and Law*. Oxford University Press. ISBN-10: 0199794448