Course Description

How do bodies matter? This five-day course will provide students an introduction to social and cultural conceptions of the body. We will explore the ways the body intersects with identity, politics, economy, and everyday life. Throughout this course, we will push the limits of what we think we know about our own bodies, using the readings and course materials to continuously reflect back on how we understand our own bodies and what potentialities we can create and embody. In thinking about the body, questions and paradoxes we will address include: is there a pre-social body? What is the relationship between biology, culture, and the body? How does inscription and embodiment take place? How is the body a site of power? In what ways can we embodied beings resist and move?

Learning Outcomes

By course end, students will have a richer understanding of their own body, in addition to gender, sexuality, race, disability, and health.

Course Outline

Day One: Why do bodies matter?
- Introduction to the course
- Introduction to bodies and phenomenology
- Notes on terminology
- In-class writing

Day Two: Race and ethnicity
- How do race, ethnicity, and bodies intersect?
- In-class writing

Day Three: Sex, gender, and sexuality
- What is sex, gender, and sexuality?
- How are these embodied practices?
- In-class writing

Day Four: Dis/ability
- What is disability and ability?
- How do these redefine or reorient the body?
- In-class writing

Day Five: Health
- What does health tell us about the body?
- How is illness both social and material?
- In-class writing
Assessment

In-class writing: 35%
Participation: 30%
Manifesto: 35%