



# Appendix

## Crossing the Threshold in Introductory Women's and Gender Studies Courses: An Assessment of Student Learning

### SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| APPENDIX A   | 2 |
| Start of semester survey   |   |
| APPENDIX B   | 3 |
| End of semester survey   |   |
| APPENDIX C   | 4 |
| Skills assessments 1 and 2   |   |
| APPENDIX D   | 6 |
| Final reflective prompt (completed during the final exam period, either as take home or upload to d2l) |   |
| APPENDIX E   | 7 |
| Skills assessment rubric   |   |

## APPENDIX A START OF SEMESTER SURVEY

This is a course that's all about gender, race, and sexuality: men's and women's roles, status of women, social equality. At the beginning of the semester, the goal of this survey is to find out more about what your experiences have been in having these kinds of conversations and what your current thinking is. Please respond to the following questions as specifically as you can.

1) What led you to enroll in this course? What are your expectations for the class? What do you hope to learn about in this class?

2) Have you discussed issues about gender (men's and women's roles, what is 'feminine and masculine' behavior) primarily in academic or nonacademic contexts? What are some examples you can think of?

3) What kinds of academic study have you done about these topics in the past, and what do you remember most about them?

4) In your academic or nonacademic life, where do you see the topics of men's and women's roles, gender equity, or other issues of diversity and multiculturalism having the largest role?

5) In the class we'll be focusing on four threshold concepts:

- a) social construction of gender
- b) privilege and oppression
- c) intersectionality
- d) feminist praxis

Briefly, write about your level of familiarity with each of these terms (if any) or any associations you have with these concepts. It is okay if they are totally new to you.

## APPENDIX B: END OF SEMESTER SURVEY

- 1) Thinking about your initial responses to the start-of-semester survey about what led you to enroll in the course, your expectations for the class, and your learning goals, were your expectations and goals fulfilled?
- 2) In what ways did your conversations about gender continue in new or similar settings, how were they different?
- 3) Were there other kinds of academic learning you did about gender (men's and women's roles, what is 'feminine and masculine' behavior) and how did it overlap with, challenge, or complement the material studied in this course?
- 4) What is your current understanding or thinking about the four threshold concepts?
  - a) social construction of gender
  - b) privilege and oppression
  - c) intersectionality
  - d) feminist praxis

## APPENDIX C: SKILLS ASSESSMENTS 1 AND 2

### Assessment 1

You are about to enter into the first skills assessment for this class. Once you begin, you will have 2 hours to complete this assignment in the D2L quiz function. You will be asked to watch a commercial and analyze it using the framework of the threshold concept “social construction of gender.” You are allowed to refer to your books and other readings, as well as your notes, when completing this assignment, but you are forbidden from consulting with other students or outside sources.

It is recommended that you manage your time wisely. I suggest spending the first 10 minutes watching the commercial several times, and jotting down notes about your insights, including any connections you can make with the course readings and information. Then, sketch out a rough outline of the shape that your answer will take. An outline might be helpful here. Then begin drafting; be sure to leave 10-15 minutes to reread, revise, edit, and carefully proofread your response. I strongly recommend that you complete your initial draft in a word processing program like Microsoft Word, that you name and then frequently save your document in the writing process, then cut and paste your final response into the D2L quiz submission space; you can click on the “paste from Word” icon in the response box to preserve formatting.

Your answer will be assessed on your ability to interpret, explain, and evaluate a cultural artifact, including the rubric that was provided to you.

You will also be assessed on your demonstrated knowledge of course concepts and your ability to integrate them into your analysis.

Specific instructions: Analyze the following Summer’s Eve commercial utilizing the skills and content that you have learned in class. How does this advertisement illustrate several key concepts about gender norms, influencing contexts on the construction of gender, masculinity, and femininity, and masculine and feminine sexual scripts that we have read about thus far? In particular, you should draw from readings and discussion on the topic of the Social Construction of Gender:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4Cs3Pp7mYg>

You may refer to any of the readings we have done so far. You are encouraged to draw from the following sources we have read and discussed in class: "Chapter 2: Social Constructionism" from *Threshold Concepts in Women's and Gender Studies*

### Assessment 2

Your response should be 3 double-spaced pages long (it can be longer, but not shorter), and should be written in the form of an essay, with a brief introduction, including a thesis statement, body paragraphs that expand on and develop that thesis, and a brief conclusion.

Prompt:

Feminist analyses of family and work focus on changing the cultural, social, political, and economic conditions that shape men’s and women’s experiences of both family responsibilities (caregiving) and the workplace.

Drawing on what you have learned about key threshold concepts (social construction of gender, privilege and oppression, and intersectionality) over the last few weeks, answer the following questions:

What are some of the conditions that most need to be changed, and why?

What additional problems become visible when we think about parenting and workplace issues not just in terms of gender, but also in terms of race, class, and sexual identity?

In your answers to these questions, be sure to refer to relevant arguments, terms, concepts, and statistics from the course readings. You need not provide a works cited page. You should not use outside sources or research to complete the assignment; its purpose is to assess your comprehension of the assigned course readings and materials.

APPENDIX D: FINAL REFLECTIVE PROMPT (COMPLETED DURING THE FINAL EXAM PERIOD, EITHER AS TAKE HOME OR UPLOAD TO D2L)

**Unit 5 Assessment:**

The purpose of this final self-assessment/reflection is for you to assess your own learning over the course of the semester as well as to identify those strategies and materials that were most important in helping you advance your understanding of the course material. In a well-organized essay, respond to the following prompt:

Consider the four threshold concepts we learned about to use as “lenses” for understanding women’s and gender studies as a field as well as to try on feminist ways of seeing.

In this reflective response, discuss your current understanding of each of the four threshold concepts; in your discussion, identify which readings, class activities, or independent analysis strategies were most helpful in developing your grasp of the concept, as well as any course material, teaching and learning activities, or independent experiences challenged or complicated your understanding (or created barriers for your learning).

Concepts to discuss: social construction of gender, privilege and oppression, intersectionality, feminist praxis

You will have 120 minutes to write this essay

## APPENDIX E: SKILLS ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Student work demonstrates achievement of the comprehension of the threshold concept when the following criteria are met at the following levels:

|                             | Student work achieving the learning goal at an Advanced level will...   | Student work achieving the learning goal at an Proficient level will...   | Student work achieving the learning goal at an Competent level will...  | Student work achieving the learning goal at an Developing level will...   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Framing and analysis</b> | <p>Accurately use the threshold concept(s) to frame the analysis, identifying overlaps and relationships between them</p> <p>Accurately and insightfully use the threshold concept to demonstrate a feminist stance</p> | <p>Accurately use the threshold concept to frame the analysis</p> <p>Accurately use the threshold concept(s) to demonstrate a feminist stance</p> | <p>Use the threshold concept(s) to frame the analysis, perhaps with some limitations or misunderstandings</p> <p>Use the threshold concept as a lens to demonstrate a feminist stance</p> | <p>Not use the threshold concept(s) to frame the analysis</p> <p>Not use the threshold concept as a lens to demonstrate a feminist stance</p> |
| <b>Evidence</b>             | Provide multiple pieces of evidence from the course material and additional, non-course-based examples to illustrate the threshold concept(s)   | Provide one or more pieces evidence from the course material to illustrate the threshold concept(s)   | Provide at least one piece of evidence from course material to illustrate the threshold concept(s)  | Not provide evidence and examples from the course material or other sources to illustrate the threshold concept                               |
| <b>Accuracy</b>             | Accurately understand the threshold concepts(s) and identify both course-based and new, independently generated evidence that illustrates it.   | Accurately understand the threshold concepts(s) and identify course-based evidence that illustrates it.   | Demonstrate an accurate understanding of the threshold concept (s)  | Misunderstand or mischaracterize the threshold concept(s)   |



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