UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE MADRID

Facultad de Enfermería, Fisioterapia y Podología
Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Optional Subject of DEGREE (Academic year 2026-2027)

Name SUBJECT: GENDER & HEALTH

Code: 804328
Type of subject (character): OPTIONAL
Center responsible: FACULTY OF NURSING, PHYSIOTHERAPY AND PODIATRY
Credits: 3
Number of places offered: 30

	Total (32%)	Theory	Practices	Others
Face-to-face hours	27	15	12	

Proposed calendar and schedule: First Semester (20 October to 10 December 2026) / Wednesdays / 16-19h

Student profile (Degrees offered, if any): Nursing, Physiotherapy, Podiatry

BRIEF DESCRIPTOR

The knowledge and practices that shape healthcare systems have a gendered nature that influences the conception and study of diseases, their diagnosis and treatment, and clinical practice. The study of gender's influence has increasingly gained space in public debate, as well as in the scientific and socio-health context. Are you interested in understanding how gender differences contribute to inequality among women, men, and non-binary people? Would you like to learn about theories and tools to promote equity and apply a gender perspective in your healthcare and research practice? Do you believe that by applying an intersectional approach—considering the interaction of gender with other social determinants (ethnicity, social class, disability, etc.)—health inequities can be better understood?
In this course, we will explore these concerns. Our goal is to approach the clinical and biomedical reality with the critical and complex perspective necessary to develop fairer ways of practicing healthcare.

OBJECTIVES

General objective:

Understanding and applying the gender approach in the healthcare context and in health research.

Specific objectives:

- Understanding the conceptual frameworks that feminist theories contribute to the knowledge about sex, gender, and health.
- Analysing the importance of gender as a determinant of health at an individual and collective level.
- Understanding the gender perspective in health and identify its applications.
- Identifying and interpreting the gender biases and inequalities in health through the analysis of available sources of information and evidence.
- Analysing from a gender perspective the processes of health and illness of people in their different stages of life.
- Identifying situations of gender violence, its causes, consequences, and possible protocols of intervention.

- Making visible and assessing the levels of formal and informal care, identifying the reasons behind the feminisation of care and its implications for health.
- Understanding the impact of gender inequalities on the development of professional careers.
- Incorporating the gender perspective into social and health care research.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND COMPETENCES

Knowledge

- To know the general principles that articulate the theoretical approaches established in the programme.
- To acquire and consolidate the recognition of equality and non-discrimination on the grounds of gender.
- To know and recognise the gender stereotypes presents in our society.
- To know the social and health policies for the promotion of gender equality.

Skills

- To express oneself correctly.
- To develop critical and creative thinking.
- To analyse thoughtfully situations of gender discrimination, in past and present times.
- To analyse the historical and conceptual reasons for the differences between women and men.
- To identify the signs of the persistence of sexist thinking in language and acquire the practice of using non-sexist language.
- To identify the physiological characteristics of the vital stages of the female life cycle and the processes of medicalisation of these stages.
- To recognise the difficulties faced by women in the development of a professional career.

Competences

- To organise, plan, and develop autonomously the learning and search for information on the course specific topics.
- To develop logical analysis and reasoned communication in public of the theses and fundamental concepts that underpin the theoretical approaches of this course.
- To develop professional activities addressed to a general public that respect and promote equal opportunities; non-discrimination on grounds of gender, race or disability; sexual and reproductive rights; free and equal access to healthcare.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, students are expected to know how to:

- Understand the influence of the sex-gender system in society and, specifically, in the social and healthcare context.
- Detect the influence of the sex-gender binomial in health-disease processes.
- Identify the influence of the sex-gender system on personal identity and professional values, attitudes, ethical behaviour, and communication skills in care relationships.
- Approach their future care work from a gender perspective, paying special attention to possible situations of violence, inequity in access to healthcare and social services, and intersectional injustices.
- Detect how gender biases in research undermine health and decision-making in the distribution of and access to services.
- Reflect on the possibilities and strategies for transforming social and subjective reality to promote equality and social justice.

TEACHING ACTIVITIES (theoretical, practical, seminars, workshops, etc.)

- **Theoretical sessions**: presentation of contents by the teacher in interaction with the students.
- **Practical sessions**: analysis and presentation of cases; critical analysis of empirical data related to the course subjects; development of topics with films or other narrative resources.
- **Personal mentoring** to supervise students' work-in-progress.

- Occasionally, there may be **extracurricular activities** (attendance at exhibitions, seminars and specific workshops related to the course, participation in conferences, etc.).

AGENDA/ CONTENTS

1. Introduction and theoretical framework: feminist theories. Sex and gender, the social construction of bodies. Gender, health and structural inequalities. Biomedical discourse and the construction of difference. Feminist epistemological approaches to health.

2. Gender bias in research and health care. Underdiagnosis. Medicalisation. Access to clinical trials.

3. Injustices in the management of sexual and reproductive health. Menstruation. Menopause. Obstetric violence.

4. Gender violence and health. Types of gender violence. Consequences of violence on health. Detection and approach in the consultation room. Difficulties and protocols for action.

5. Social and health care for trans, non-binary, and/or non-normative sexual orientation individuals (LGTBQ+ community).

6. Women carers. Feminisation of informal care. Feminisation of the health professions. Professional careers, power relations and the glass ceiling.

EVALUATION

Ordinary Evaluation

- Completion of a project using the Photovoice methodology. This will involve the submission of four assignments: three group assignments (60% of the final grade) and one individual assignment (30% of the final grade). The individual assignment will be completed outside the classroom. The group assignments will be carried out during the practical sessions held in class.
- Participation in class and/or the virtual forum. This will account for 10% of the final grade.

The assessment system is continuous and requires in-person attendance; therefore, attending at least 80% of class hours is essential to pass the course. Each student must ensure that their attendance is compatible with any other activities.

Extraordinary Evaluation

- Completion of a written essay exam based on the course contents.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Basic bibliography

- Cabré Pairet, Montserrat y Salmón Muñiz, Fernando eds. 2013. *Sexo y género en Medicina: una introducción a los estudios de las mujeres y de género en ciencias de la salud*. Santander: Editorial de la Universidad de Cantabria.
- García Dauder, Dau y Pérez Sedeño, Eulalia. 2017. *Las mentiras científicas sobre las mujeres*. Madrid: La Catarata
- De Miguel, Ana. 2015. *Neoliberalismo sexual. El mito de la libre elección*. Madrid: Cátedra
- OMS. 2018. *Gender & Health*
- Ortiz-Gómez, Teresa. 2006. *Medicina, historia y género. 130 años de investigación feminista*. Oviedo: KRK.
- Payne, Sarah. 2006. *The Health of Men and Women*. Cambridge: Policy
- Scott, Joan W. 1986. Gender: A useful category of historical analysis. *The American Historical Review* 91(5): 1053-1075
- Valls-Llobet, Carma. 2009. *Mujeres, salud y poder.* Madrid: Cátedra
- Varela, Nuria. 2005. *Feminismo para principiantes*. Madrid: Ediciones B
- Velasco-Martín, Marta y Santesmases, María Jesús. 2021. Ciencia, hogar y trabajo colectivo. Saberes en

Acción. 1 abril 2021. Societat Catalana d'Història de la Ciència i de la Tècnica y el Institut Interuniversitari López Piñero. Disponible en: https://sabersenaccio.iec.cat/es/ciencia-hogar-y-trabajo-colectivo/

- Velasco-Martín Marta y Ignaziuk, Ágata. 2021. Androcentrismo y ciencia. Saberes en Acción. 25 marzo 2021. Societat Catalana d'Història de la Ciència i de la Tècnica y el Institut Interuniversitari López Piñero. Disponible en: https://sabersenaccio.iec.cat/es/ciencia-hogar-y-trabajo-colectivo/

Further Readings

- Beauvoir, Simone. 1998. *El segundo sexo*. Madrid: Cátedra
- Blewer, Audrey L. et al. 2018. Gender Disparities among Adult Recipients of Bystander Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation in the Public. *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes* 11 (8): e004710
- Butler, Judith. 2001. *El género en disputa*. Barcelona: Paidós
- Courtnay, Will H. 2000. Constructions of masculinity and their influence on men's wellbeing: a theory of gender and health. *Social Science & Medicine* 50: 1385-1401
- Dusenbery, Maya. 2017. *Doing Harm*. Harper One
- Fox Keller, Evelyn. Feminism and science. 1982. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. 7(3): 589-602
- Haraway, Donna. Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. 1988. *Feminist Studies* 14 (3): 575-599. (Versión en castellano del capítulo 7 de: Haraway, Donna J. *Ciencia, cyborgs y mujeres. La reinvención de la naturaleza*. 1995. Madrid: Cátedra-Feminismos).
- Hoffman, Diane y Tarzian, Anita. 2001. The girl who cried pain: A bias against women in the treatment of pain. *The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*, 29(1), 13-27.
- Gérvas, Juan y Pérez-Fdez, Mercedes. 2016. *El encarnizamiento médico contra las mujeres.* Libros del Lince
- Martin, Emily. 1991. The egg and the sperm: How science has constructed a romance based on stereotypical male-female roles. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 16 (3):485-501. (Traducción al castellano en Cabré Pairet, Montserrat; Salmón Muñiz, Fernando. *Sexo y género en medicina: una introducción a los estudios de las mujeres y de género en ciencias de la salud*. 2013. Santander: Editorial de la Universidad de Cantabria, pp. 33-54).
- Martin, Emily. 1994. Medical Metaphors of Women's Bodies: Menstruation and Menopause", in: E. Fee & N. Kriger, eds. *Women's Health, Politics, and Power*. New York: Baywood Publishing Company Inc.
- McHugh, Maureen C. y Chrisler, Joan C. 2015. *The Wrong Prescription for Women: How Medicine and Media Create a "Need" for Treatments, Drugs, and Surgery.* Santa Barbara: Praeger
- Nechas, Eileen y Denise Foley. 1994. *Unequal Treatment: What You Don't Know About How Women Are Mistreated by the Medical Community.* Nueva York: Simons & Schuster
- Rosser, Sue V. 2015. Clinical trials and experimental science, bias against women in. In: Naples, Nancy A., ed. The Wiley Blackwell encyclopedia of gender and sexuality studies https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118663219.wbegss035
- Schiebinger, Londa. 2004. ¿Tiene sexo la mente? Las mujeres en los orígenes de la ciencia moderna. Madrid: Cátedra.
- Sen, Gita, Östlin, Piroska y George, Asha. 2008. *Unequal, Unfair, Ineffective and Inefficient: Gender Inequity in Health: Why it exists and how we can change it: A Synthesis of the WHO Women and Gender Equity Knowledge Network Final Report.* National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health
- *The Lancet*, 9-15 February 2019, Vol.393 (10171) [monográfico sobre feminismo]
- Wilkins, David, Payne, Sarah, Granville, Gillian y Branney, Peter. 2008. T*he gender and access to health services study: Final report*. Department of Health.

TEACHING STAFF* (It must be indicated if the teaching staff has already completed all their teaching dedication or not)

Rosana Triviño Caballero (complete teaching dedication). rosanatr@ucm.es
Marta Velasco Martín (complete teaching dedication). marvel11@ucm.es
Department of Public Health and Child-Maternal Health, Faculty of Medicine