



**CPED 574/CECP 837:  
Body Politics  
Summer 2023**

**INSTRUCTOR**

Justin D. Henderson, Ph.D., NCC  
Assistant Professor | Licensed Psychologist

Office: Roger 319

E-mail: justinhenderson@lclark.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

**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.

**OBJECTIVES**

The participant 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.

**CTSP DEPARTMENT ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Class attendance is expected and required for this course. We meet for two days online. Missing more than ten percent of class time (i.e., 1.5 hours for a 15 hour class; 1 credit) may result in failure to complete the class. In case of extreme hardship and also at the discretion of the instructor, a grade of incomplete may be given for an assignment or the entire course. In such cases, the work to be submitted in order to remove the incomplete must be documented appropriately and stated deadlines met. Students are expected to be on time to class and tardiness may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

### 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.

### EVALUATION

#### Classroom Discussion and Participation (20 points)

This course is heavily participatory and requires students to engage in both dyadic and experiential training methods. Students are expected to attend class in order to participate in exploring the topics in class. It is also expected that students have done the assigned readings prior to that class meeting. 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.

#### "The Story of My Body" Interview and Paper (80 points)

Class participants will work in pairs in the first class session 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 in last class):**

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, skin tone, etc. 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 at school, in your community, and in public relative to your body. Were you judged or evaluated based on your body appearance, attractiveness, etc.?
5. What were major influences on how you felt about your body growing up (early childhood, later childhood, adolescence, adulthood)?
6. What were the cultural expectations placed on your body growing up? How about now?
7. Describe the impact of your body experiences on dating, education, career, and other important aspects of your adult life.
8. How did dominant discourses about body size, beauty, masculinity/femininity, abilities, athleticism, skin tone, etc. affect your family and other important

<p>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?</p> <p>9. Were there things that you struggled to accept about your body? How about now?</p> <p>10. 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?</p>	
<b>SUMMARY OF POINTS</b>	
Class Attendance	<b>20 points</b>
Story of My Body Paper	<b>80 points</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 points</b>
<b>COURSE GRADING SCALE</b>	
<p>95-100% = A</p> <p>90-94% = A-</p> <p>87-89% = B+</p> <p>84-86% = B</p> <p>80-83% = B-</p> <p>77-79% = C+</p> <p>74-76% = C</p> <p>70-73% = C-</p> <p>≤ 69% = F</p>	

<b>CLASS STRUCTURE AND SCHEDULE</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings &amp; Assignments</b>
<b>6/9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Power Dynamics, Systems, and the Body</li> <li>-Food Politics &amp; The Body</li> <li>-Media &amp; The Body</li> <li>-Theories of Body Image</li> <li>- Objectification and Surveillance</li> <li>-Diverse bodies, socialization, and marginalization</li> </ul>	<p>Szymanski, Moffitt, &amp; Carr (2011) Sexual Objectification of Women: Advances to Theory and Research. <i>The Counseling Psychologist</i>, 39(1), 6–38.</p> <p>Brewster, M. E., Sandil, R., DeBlaere, C., Breslow, A., &amp; Eklund, A. (2017). “Do you even lift, bro?” Objectification, minority stress, and body image concerns for sexual minority men. <i>Psychology of Men &amp; Masculinity</i>, 18(2), 87-98.  <a href="http://dx.doi.org.library.lcproxy.org/10.1037/men0000043">http://dx.doi.org.library.lcproxy.org/10.1037/men0000043</a></p> <p>Rhode, D. L. (2010) <i>The Beauty Bias: The Injustice of Appearance in Life and Law</i>. Oxford University Press. Chapter 2</p> <p><b>The Story of My Body Interviews</b></p>
<b>6/16</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Deconstructing Socialization</li> <li>-Body Shame</li> <li>-Interface of Somatic and Image</li> <li>-Bodies in Therapy</li> <li>-Engaged body empowerment</li> <li>-Clinical Application/Practice</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Story of My Body Paper (Submit through Moodle)</b></p>

*The instructor reserved the right to adjust the schedule as needed.*