

This Professor Offers Female Students Extra Credit For Not Shaving Their Armpits

“There’s no better way to learn about societal norms than to violate them and see how people react,” she said.

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Arizona State University women and gender studies professor Breanne Fahs has been offering women extra credit if they [agree not to shave their body hair](#) for the whole semester.

Male students are also eligible for extra credit, but they have to shave all of their hair from the neck down.



asunews.asu.edu

Fahs came up with the offer four years ago as an attempt to get her students to challenge gender norms.

“There’s no better way to learn about societal norms than to violate them and see how people react,” Fahs said. “There’s really no reason why the choice to shave, or not, should be a big deal. But it is, as the students tend to find out quickly.”



breannefahs.com

Fahs

The students are encouraged by Fahs, director of the Center for Feminist Research on Gender and Sexuality, to keep a journal throughout the process to document their experiences.

Often, the female students face ridicule for having hairy armpits, and the men gain insight into the pressure women experience to be hairless, the professor said.



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The students who agree to spend 10 weeks in a hairier state of being said it's often a life-changing experience, and were shocked at how their family and friends reacted.

"Many of my friends didn't want to work out next to me or hear about the assignment, and my mother was distraught at the idea that I would be getting married in a white dress with armpit hair," student Stephanie Robinson said.

Another student, Grace Scale, added that her male friends had some of the harshest reactions.

"One of my dearest friends — at the time — compared my underarm hair to 'the sludge in the bottom of the garbage can,'" she said.