

Introduction to Queer Studies
English 282 (Cross-Listed with Women's Studies 380)
Meeting Days/Times: Location

Professor: Debra Modellmog
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510 Denney Hall, 164 West 17th Avenue
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Office Hours: MW 11:30-1:00 and by appointment

English 282 satisfies the following GEC categories:

GEC 2.Breadth: C. Arts and Humanities; (3) Cultures and Ideas

Goals:

Students evaluate significant writing and works of art. Such studies develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students develop abilities to be informed observers of, or active participants in, the visual, spatial, performing, spoken, or literary arts.
2. Students develop an understanding of the foundations of human beliefs, the nature of reality, and the norms that guide human behavior.
3. Students examine and interpret how the human condition and human values are explored through works of art and humanistic writings.

GEC 4. Diversity (1) Social Diversity in the U.S.

Goals:

Students' understanding of the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States is enhanced.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students describe the roles of such categories as race, gender, class, ethnicity and religion in the pluralistic institutions and cultures of the United States.
2. Students recognize the role of social diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values regarding appreciation, tolerance, and equality of others.

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the growing field of queer studies. As an interdisciplinary enterprise, the course draws on work in politics, philosophy, film, sociology, history, and literary studies to examine the ways that a politics of normalization has fed into multiple systems of domination. With its point of departure in feminist critiques of sexuality as well as gay and lesbian studies, queer studies has expanded the interrogation of identity to focus on many other culturally salient categories, such as race, class, religion, and nationality. Therefore, this course attempts to frame the introduction to queer studies with this “queer of color critique” that problematizes, while still familiarizes students with, the canonical texts of queer theory.

Course Objectives:

1. To understand the historical and theoretical emergence of the complex concept of “queer” and to examine the “queer of color critique”
2. To enhance awareness of, and respect and appreciation for, the diversity of individuals and experiences within society, particularly in the United States
3. To understand the challenges that queer studies present to concepts such as social diversity, tolerance, and equality
4. To analyze the norms, particularly those grounded in sexuality, that guide contemporary concepts of the human condition, nature, and reality
5. To explore contemporary values related to sexuality in various forms of human expression, including literature, philosophy, and film
6. To synthesize and apply knowledge from diverse disciplines to understand the complex ways that gender, race, class, and nationality intersect with sexuality in the contemporary world, especially in the United States
7. To write about and conduct research on the issues pertaining to sexuality, race, class, and nationality in contemporary world.

Required Texts (can be purchased at SBX):

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, Volume 1*

Michael Warner, ed., *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*

Henry Abelove, Michele Aina Barale and David M. Halperin, eds., *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*

Michael Warner, *The Trouble with Normal: Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life*

Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality: Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy*

Juana Maria Rodriguez, *Queer Latinidad: Identity Practices, Discursive Spaces*

E. Patrick Johnson and Mae G. Henderson, eds., *Black Queer Studies: A Critical Anthology*

Course Requirements:

Class participation (20%)

Full participation on the part of each member of the course is necessary to have a successful quarter-long discussion of queer studies. This means I expect each of us to arrive at each class meeting fully prepared to enter our ongoing discussion. To be fully prepared means one has completed the reading, taken some time to reflect on it, and formulated some questions, themes, dynamics to discuss in class. The course will involve regular in-class exercises as well as small and large group discussions. Students that have more than two unexcused absences will have their participation score lowered by a grade for each additional unexcused absence.

Essay #1 (25%)

The first essay, approximately 4-5 doubled-spaced pages, should examine how a “queer” understanding of sexuality undercuts identity politics and why this might be important, particularly in the US climate of neoliberalism. How does this critique challenge concepts of diversity and tolerance? How does it also enact an intersectional analysis of the various categories of social difference?

Essay #2 (25%)

The second essay, 4-5 pages, should examine what it really means to say that sexuality is “socially constructed,” particularly as it intersects with race, class, and nationality. What does this mean about our concept of human reality and the norms that guide our behavior? Be sure to support your argument with examples from some of the literature or film we’ve examined this quarter.

Final Exam (30%)

A cumulative exam on the major concepts and critiques encountered in the course. It will consist of short answer responses as well as a longer essay, all of which will be written in class during the university’s scheduled exam time for our class.

Grading:

Overall grades will be based on the quality of your written assignments and the constructive nature of your class participation. The essays will be graded according to (a) the clarity of your argument, (b) your use of evidence to support your argument, (c) the relevance and insight of your question(s), and (d) the accuracy of grammar, syntax and spelling. All assignments are due at the time/day noted on the schedule. Late papers will be penalized 5 points (half a letter-grade) per day, including weekend days. **Papers are not accepted via email.**

Grading Scale:

A = 95-100
A- = 90-94
B+ = 87-89
B = 84-86
B- = 80-83
C+ = 77-79
C = 74-76
C- = 70-73
D+ = 67-69
D = 64-66
E = 63 and below

Academic Integrity:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations and essays. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct at studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp

Accessibility:

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

Schedule of Readings:

January

- 4 - Introduction to course; view *Milk*
6 - Anzaldúa, "La Prieta" (Carmen)
Delaney, *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*, excerpts (Carmen)
- 11 - Warner, *Trouble with Normal*, Chapter One
Rubin, "Thinking Sex," *g/l studies reader*
- 13 - Duggan: "Making it Perfectly Queer" (Carmen)
Patton, "Tremble, Hetero Swine!," *FQP*
- 18 - Crimp, "Right On, Girlfriend!," *FQP*
20 - Rodriguez, *Queer Latinidad*, chapter 2
- 25 - Duggan, *Twilight of Equality*, Intro, Chapters 1 & 2
27 - Duggan, chapters 3 & 4
- 29 - Essay #1 DUE by 3 pm in my box (286 UH)**

February

- 1 - Warner, *Fear of a Queer Planet*, Intro
Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, part 1
Hemingway, "The Sea Change" (short story; Carmen)
- 3 - Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, part 2
Halperin, "Is There a History of Sexuality?" *g/l studies reader*
- 8 - Ferguson, "Race-ing Homonormativity: Citizenship, Sociology, and Gay Identity," *BQS*
- 10 - Sedgwick, "Queer and Now" (Carmen)
- 15 - Ross, "Beyond the Closet as Raceless Paradigm," *BQS*
- 18 - Essay #2 DUE by 3 pm in my box (286 UH)**
- 17 - Butler, "Imitation & Gender Insubordination," *g/l studies reader*
- 22 - Sedgwick, "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay," *FQP*
Seidman, "Identity and Politics in 'Postmodern' Gay Culture: Some Historical and Cultural Notes," *FQP*
- 24 - Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?," *BQS*

March

- 1 - View Marlon Riggs, *Tongues Untied*
3 - Johnson, "'Quare' Studies, or (Almost) Everything I Know about Queer

Studies I Learned from My Grandmother," *BQS*
Poems by Audre Lorde and Essex Hemphill (Carmen)

- 8 - Rodriguez, *Queer Latinidad*, chapter 1
- 10 - Jose Esteban Munoz, "Performing Disidentifications" (Carmen)
Marga Gomez, excerpt from "Marga Gomez Is Pretty, Witty and Gay"
(Carmen) and YouTube videos of Gomez performing

Final Exam during period scheduled by the university