

LGBT 200: Introduction to LGBTQ Studies

Fall 2016, T/TH

Section 0101: 9:30-10:45 am, CSI 1122

Section 0201: 2:00-3:15 pm, CCC 1111

Instructor: Jessica Ann Vooris

Department of Women's Studies

Woods Hall

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Office hours: T/Th 11:30am – 12:30 pm, Mon/Wed by appointment

Office: Woods 2101E – office telephone 301-405-0836

Course Description

This interdisciplinary course explores historical, cultural, personal, and political aspects of the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Using sources from a variety of disciplines and fields including biology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, queer theory and women's studies students will learn about lgbtq identities and the many social movements which have contributed to lgbtq visibility and civil rights.

The course will meet two times a week for a discussion-based class. Students will be expected to come to class prepared to participate in discussion. Additional readings, grades and assignments will be posted on Canvas.

Please visit me during my office hours, as I would love to learn more about what you are thinking and learning, as well as how your work is progressing! Be sure to let me know during office hours or after class if you need any help, or any special accommodations, the sooner the better. Students with disabilities or who need time from class to observe religious holidays, please contact me ASAP to make any arrangements necessary. If you will miss class due to religious observances, please let me know by September 7th.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester students will have

- an understanding of the social construction of gender and sexuality and how these categories intersect with race, class, and ability
- basic knowledge of the histories of various lgbtq communities, activist groups and social movements.
- preliminary understanding of LGBTQ studies as a site for activism
- understand the historical and political contexts of the fight for marriage equality, AIDS activism and transgender non-discrimination laws

About Women's Studies and LGBT Studies at the University of Maryland:

The Department of Women's Studies, in the College of Arts and Humanities, offers an undergraduate certificate and minor in LGBT Studies, in addition to the B.A. and undergraduate

certificate in Women's Studies and a joint minor in Black Women's Studies (with African American Studies). The certificate in LGBT Studies is a 21-credit interdisciplinary course of study comprised of 15 required and 6 elective credits designed to complement any student's major field of study. The minor in LGBT Studies is a 15-credit interdisciplinary course of study comprised of 12 required and 3 elective credits.

We encourage current UMD undergraduates interested in any of these five programs of study to contact the Department of Women's Studies. Women's Studies provides excellent preparation for a variety of humanities and social science graduate programs, as well as professional schools. I am happy to speak to anyone who wants to discuss these different options for study. You might also wish to talk with the Women's Studies Academic Advisor, JV Sapinoso (sapinoso@umd.edu).

Required Readings

Please purchase the texts below in print or e-book form, or rent/borrow them.

Bechdel, Alison. *The Essential Dykes to Watch Out For*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 2008. **ISBN-13:** 978-0618968800

Additional readings will all be uploaded onto the Canvas Site or found through umaryland.worldcat.org.

How the course will be organized

We will meet two times a week for a discussion-based class. In order to have a productive learning environment students need to come to class having read the material, and be prepared to talk and share with others. Creating a community of learning means that we must be respectful of each other and create a space where each member of the class feels comfortable about sharing their thoughts. This does not mean that we will always agree, and in fact we may often disagree with each other, but we must always be open to hearing each other and treating each other kindly and with respect. Together we can create a learning community where dialogue is encouraged, we understand that mistakes happen, and that communication and understanding can be difficult across differences. Learning means taking risks, trying new things, playing around, guessing at times, and recognizing that sometimes we won't get it right the first time.

Communication for the Course

ELMS/Canvas: You will find course readings, and the syllabus on Canvas (elms.umd.edu). All assignments will be uploaded to Canvas unless otherwise specified, and I will use the message center to email the class. You can also use Canvas to message me, or email me directly at jvooris@umd.edu.

Please set your ELMS notifications so that you get an email when I send out any class announcements, as I will use these to keep you informed about changes to the syllabus or in the case of weather-delays. Also be sure to check your email every few days, and to have the correct email listed on testudo. These are class requirements.

If you have any difficulties getting access to these resources (email/canvas) come and talk to me as soon as possible. To get help go to OIT's Help Desk at the Computer and Space Sciences Building, Rm. 1400, or checkout the help desk webpage at: <http://www.helpdesk.umd.edu/>

Email: Faculty and advisors use email to convey important information, and students are responsible for keeping their email address up to date, and must ensure that forwarding to

another address functions properly. Failure to check email, errors in forwarding, and returned email are the responsibility of the student, and do not constitute an excuse for missing announcements or deadlines.

In your emails to me, please be sure to include LGBT 200 [section number], [your last name], [topic of email] in the subject line. I receive a lot of email and without adequate subject headings your email may get lost in my inbox. I am not responsible for emails getting lost if they are incorrectly labeled. Also, please make sure that you include a greeting in your email that does not include “hey.” You are not writing to a close friend. Dear Jessica, Dr. Vooris or Good morning/ Hello/Good afternoon are more professional and respectful. Signing off with your name is also appreciated—especially in an initial email communication. I will attempt to answer all emails within 24 hours, although this may not be feasible at particularly busy times of the semester. Also note that my email office hours end at 8 pm. If you email me after that time I will respond the next day.

Electronic Policy

No electronic devices, including laptops, cell-phones, tablets, etc, are permitted in class, unless a student has a documented accommodation which requires the use of a typing advice. Occasionally we may do classroom activities which require the use of a device, in this case, I will give advanced warning so that you can bring them in.

While laptops can be useful for taking notes, looking up information on google, or referring to the readings, they are also a source of distraction. It may be worth noting that [recent studies](#) shows that students learn more when taking notes by hand, rather than through electronic means. Other studies have shown that a student who chooses to dis-engage with class via facebook, etc, will also distract and affect the learning of other students.

Please print out your readings and bring them to class, or write copious notes (including key quotes) that will allow you to engage in classroom discussion. If this will create a severe financial hardship for you, please come see me after class.

Graded Assignments

15 % Participation and Attendance

15% Reading Responses

20% Personal Reflection Essay

20 % Historical “Object” Research Paper

20% Group Project

10% Learning Analysis

Academic Integrity:

“The student-administered Honor Code and Honor Pledge prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents and forging signatures.” (see <http://faculty.umd.edu/teach/integrity.html>).

If you are unsure of how to properly cite your information and how to avoid plagiarism please refer to online guides on MLA, APA and Chicago Style formatting. I do not have a preference for which one you use, but please pick one and use that consistently throughout an assignment. If you still need help with citations, please set up an appointment to meet with me.

Grades:

A work is excellent, unusually creative and/or analytically striking

B is fine work of high quality, though not as skilled, ambitious, or carefully presented as A

C is average or usual work fulfilling the assignment; should not be hasty, or insufficiently collaborated

D work is below average or incomplete; shows many difficulties or cannot follow instructions

F work is not sufficient to pass; unwillingness to do the work, or so many difficulties unable to complete

I will explain in more detail what the expectations are for each assignment in the handouts and on Canvas.

Grade Scale

A 94 – 100% A- 90 – 93%

B+ 87 – 89% B 83 – 86% B- 80 – 82%

C+ 77 – 79% C 73 – 76% C- 70 – 72%

D+ 67 – 69% D 63 – 66% D- 60 – 62%

Graded Assignments

15% Participation: This is a discussion-based course, and your participation is important. You are expected to come to class having read and taken notes on the material, and to be ready to discuss the material. The success of the class will depend on everyone sharing their ideas and perspectives. If you are someone who has a hard time speaking up in class, you may also use my office hours as another way to show that you are engaged in the class and with the material.

If you are not in class, you cannot receive participation points. Likewise, if you are in class, but are asleep or otherwise not paying attention, you will not receive participation points. I understand that people get sick, family emergencies happen, or you have an unforeseen circumstance that prevents your attendance. You may have one unexcused absence during the course of the semester, all others must be discussed ahead of time with me, or be accompanied by a doctor's note. In case of any absence you are responsible for the work that you have missed. Check your syllabus and connect up with classmates for notes and any information you need to know.

15 % Reading Responses: Throughout the semester you will be required to turn in 3 reading responses. You can decide which day you complete the reading response, but you must submit one for the month of September, one for the month of October and one for the month of November. These must be uploaded to ELMS the day the reading is due, BEFORE the start of class. You have the option of completing the assignment in written form, audio/video form, or in a visual/artistic form, as long as it fulfills the reading response requirements. See ELMS for a full description of the assignment.

20% Personal Reflection Essay: Drawing from texts that we have read so far on childhood, gender, and sexuality, you will pick a moment in your childhood to analyze. If you do not want to share a personal memory or story, you may choose a passage from a book or another type of media. If you choose this option, please verify with me what you will focus on. You do not have

to identify as LGBTQ to write about your experiences of gender/sexuality. 3-4 pages. See more assignment details on ELMS.

20% Research Paper: Using both primary and secondary sources you will write a report on one of the activist groups or a specific event/object that was discussed in the readings.

20% Group Project: Working in groups of 4-5 you will plan an activist event around LGBT rights and create a presentation for class. This can be done with members of WMST 250 (taught by Michele Prince).

10% Learning Analysis: 2 page analysis of what you learned over the course of the semester, key concepts/texts, what your specific journey/experience was.

University Absence Policy:

Students are expected to attend classes regularly. Consistent attendance offers students the most effective opportunity to gain command of course concepts and materials. Events that justify an excused absence include: religious observances; mandatory military obligation; illness of the student or illness of an immediate family member; participation in university activities at the request of university authorities; and compelling circumstances beyond the student's control (e.g., death in the family, required court appearance). Absences stemming from work duties other than military obligation (e.g., unexpected changes in shift assignments) and traffic/transit problems do not typically qualify for excused absence.

Students claiming an excused absence must notify the course instructor in a timely manner and provide appropriate documentation. The notification should be provided either prior to the absence or as soon afterwards as possible. In the case of religious observances, athletic events, and planned absences known at the beginning of the semester, the student must inform the instructor during the schedule adjustment period. All other absences must be reported as soon as is practical. The student must provide appropriate documentation (doctor's note for example) of the absence through email or in person in class.

Emergency Protocols:

In the case of delays or cancellations due to weather or another campus emergency I will communicate with students through email and ELMS to discuss updated class plans or to post alternative assignments online.

Waitlist Policy:

As per university policy, the first 5 students on the waitlist are given access to ELMS. If you are on the waitlist, I encourage you to attend class and do the readings, as this will ensure that you do not fall behind. Unfortunately, this does NOT guarantee you admittance to the class, and if you are not released from the waitlist, you will not be able to continue attending class the rest of the semester. If you choose not to attend class while on the waitlist and then are admitted, you will not be penalized for missing class, but you WILL be responsible for catching up on the readings, getting lecture notes from your classmates, and turning in any missing assignments.

Course Outline

Instructor reserves the right to change course outline at any time, with prior warning. An updated syllabus will be maintained on ELMS

Week 1: Introduction to the Class and Intro to Gender

Tuesday, August 30th:

- Read through the syllabus
- Michael Kaufman and Michael Kimmel's "Listening" hand-out
- David Chioni Moore's "How to Read." (handed out and read in class)
- Create concept web together

Thursday, September 1st:

- DUE: Info Sheets (on ELMS)
- The Gender Book (handed out in class and on ELMS)

Week 2: Gender and Sexuality Continued

Tuesday, September 6th

- Anne Fausto-Sterling Chapter 1-3 (ELMS)
- Dean Spade's "Purportedly Gendered Body Parts" (ELMS)

Recommended: Emily Martin's Egg and Sperm article

Thursday, September 8th

Hanne Blank *Straight* Chapter One (ELMS)

Week 3: Gay and Lesbian Identities and Homophobia

Tuesday, September 13th:

- Jewelle Gomez "Because Silence is Costly" (ELMS)
- CJ Pascoe, "Dude, You're a Fag" (ELMS)

Thursday, September 15th:

DTWOF

Required: intro, 17-27, 50, 55, 56, 78, 79, 81, 91, 92, 113, 114, 123, 147-149, 155, 157-168,

Recommended: read as much as you can/want of 1-184. Pages that I would recommend in addition to the required: 17, 18, 21, 22, 24, 27, 37, 74, 90, 94, 95, 96, 109, 124.

[Alison Bechdel's website](#) can be helpful for sorting out the different characters/time-lines.

Week 4: Bisexual and Asexual Identities

Tuesday, September 20th

Chapter One from Bi Revolution (ELMS)

[Cis Privilege and Identity Policing in the Bi and Pan Communities](#) (online)

DTWOF: 184, 188, 191, 192, 194, 197-199, 207, 216, 218, 223

Recommended: Intro, Chapter Two from Bi Revolution (ELMS), DTWOF 184-229

Wednesday, September 21st

[5 Myths about Asexuality](#) (online)

[Aven website](#) (online) Please read the Welcome page, and "Overview" and "General FAQ" under the About Asexuality tab.

Week 5: Transgender Identities and Histories

Tuesday, September 27th:

Chapter Two from Susan Stryker's "Transgender History" (ELMS)

Redefining Realness excerpts (ELMS)

[Navigating Masculinity as a Black Trans Man](#) (online)

Wednesday, September 28th:

Julia Serano "Dismantling Cissexual Privilege" (ELMS)

DTWOF: 125, 126, 230

Excerpts from TransGirlNextDoor: <http://transgirlnextdoor.tumblr.com/>

Please read as much as you want/can of Kylie's comic, but make sure to read the following for class:

Strangers: <http://transgirlnextdoor.tumblr.com/post/108760963229>

Media: <http://transgirlnextdoor.tumblr.com/post/108214208434>

Adjusting: <http://transgirlnextdoor.tumblr.com/post/106921336585>

Asking: <http://transgirlnextdoor.tumblr.com/post/107330473434>

That Damn Tuck: <http://transgirlnextdoor.tumblr.com/post/102411924984>

Problematic Men: <http://transgirlnextdoor.tumblr.com/post/99672717489>

Happiness: <http://transgirlnextdoor.tumblr.com/post/96580505064>

Catcalling: <http://transgirlnextdoor.tumblr.com/post/95662262474>

Recommended: Mutilating Gender by Dean Spade (ELMS)

Week 6: Gay and Lesbian Histories, late 19th century and early 20th century

Tuesday, October 4th:

Finding Out, chapters one and two (readings section optional) (ELMS)

Thursday, October 6th:

Faderman, Butches/Femmes/Kiki's (ELMS)

Gender/Sexuality Reflection due Sunday, October 9th

Week 7: Stonewall and Beyond

Tuesday, October 11th:

Finding Out, Chapter 4 (ELMS)

Transgender History, Chapter 3 (ELMS)

Thursday, October 13th:

Cherrie Moraga, “Loving in the War Years” (ELMS)

Mia McKenzie “Resistance is the Source of Queer Joy” (ELMS)

Week 8: AIDS and ACT UP *warning for graphic imagery of illness/death* throughout the readings and movie*

Tuesday, October 18th:

TV Reed’s Chapter on “ACT UP” (ELMS)

Queer America Chapter 7 “From Carter to Reagan” and “The Challenge of AIDS” (ELMS)

Thursday, October 20th:

Watch for class “The Normal Heart” (optional class screening Wed night at 7pm in Talliaferro 0135, multimedia studio)

Read excerpts from Ron Mohring’s “Survivable World” (ELMS)

Week 9: Black Lives Matter and Orlando Shooting

Tuesday, October 25th:

[A Herstory of Black Lives Matter,](#)
[Why Black Lives Should Matter to All LGBTQ People,](#)
Mia McKenzie “To the Black Queer Kids” (ELMS)

Recommended (for this week or later): Queer America 90s and early 2000s (ELMS)

Thursday, October 27th:

[A Queer Muslim Response to the Shooting,](#)
[What 14 LGBTQ Activists Want You to Know,](#)
[Latinx Queer and Trans Activists Explain the Shooting \(video\)](#)

Week 10: Beyond Gay Marriage/Against Equality

Tuesday, November 1st:

Calling in a Queer Debt by Mia McKenzie (ELMS)

Queer Kids Against Queer Marriage (ELMS)

Wednesday, November 3rd

Dean Spade’s “Their laws will not make us Safer” (ELMS)

Historical Research Paper due: Sunday, November 6th

Week 11: Returning to DTWOF

Tuesday, November 8th

NO CLASS, use this time to meet with your groups

Thursday, November 10th

DTWOF

Required: 232, 237-238, 240, 241, 244-245, 248, 250-251, 254, 261-263, 267, 276-282.

Recommended: 230-285

Week 12: The Body and Mind

Tuesday, November 15th:

Eli Clare's "The Marrow's Telling" poems (ELMS)

Eli Clare's disability and queerness essay (ELMS)

Thursday, November 17th:

[Unalterable](#) (online) (The first link goes to this article published on Autostraddle--I would recommend this because you can also read the comments). (It is also published on [Everyday Feminism here](#) and the text is in smaller chunks which may make it easier to read for some people.)

[On Being Queer and Autistic](#) (online)

Week 13: LGBTQ Children

Tuesday, November 22nd:

"Unsuitable for Children" in *That's Revolting* (ELMS)

Excerpt from [Raising My Rainbow](#) blog (online): "[Trust Your Mama Gut](#)"

Excerpt DTWOF: 282, 306, 312, 316, 320, 351

Recommended: "[Stop Waiting For My Gay Son to Change](#)" --Amelia (whose son came out at age 7).

Thursday, November 24th: No Class for Thanksgiving

Week 14: The Media and Contemporary Queer Cultural Production

Tuesday, November 29th

[A Queer Musician's Guide to Getting Heard by B. Steady](#),

Audre Lorde "Silence Into Action" (ELMS file)

Recommended: [Audre Lorde "Poetry is Not a Luxury"](#)

Visit by Be Steadwell!!

Thursday, December 1st

Class Wrap-Up/Concept Web Exercise

Week 15: Group Presentations

Tuesday, December 6th

Group presentations

Thursday, December 8th

Group Presentations

Final group projects due Sunday, December 11th.

Week 16:

Learning Analysis Due: Date of final exam