QS/WGSS 262: Introduction to Queer Studies

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Credit Hours: 3
Oregon State University
Prerequisites: None

COURSE INFORMATION

Catalog Course Description: Centering itself on activism and scholarship, this course examines homophobia's and transphobia's relationship with racism, colonialism, sexism, ableism, classism and other forms of oppression. Introduces key concepts, histories, and political frameworks within Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer political movements.

What is Queer Studies? Queer Studies is an interdisciplinary field that critiques the ways in which gender and sexuality are constructed and policed and, further, imagines liberatory futures for people of all genders and sexualities.

Difference, Power, and Discrimination Courses Baccalaureate Core Requirement

QS 262: Introduction to Queer Studies fulfills the Difference, Power, and Discrimination (DPD) requirement in the Baccalaureate Core. The DPD requirement engages students in the intellectual examination of the complexity of the structures, systems, and ideologies that sustain discrimination and the unequal distribution of power and resources in society. The unequal distribution of social, economic, and political power in the United States and in other countries is sustained through a variety of individual beliefs and institutional practices. These beliefs and practices have tended to obscure the origins and operations of social discrimination such that this unequal power distribution is often viewed as the natural order. Examination of DPD course material will enhance meaningful democratic participation in our diverse university community and our increasingly multicultural U.S. society.

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course fulfills OSU’s Baccalaureate Core in Difference, Power, and Discrimination Baccalaureate Core requirement. The learning outcomes for this course include, but are not limited to, the following interrelated skills. In this course you will:

Queer Studies
- Develop literacy in key terms and concepts within Queer Studies.
• Interrogate sexuality and gender as social categories.
• Analyze issues of systemic power, privilege, and oppression.
• Explain the intersections between sexuality and gender in relationship to other social locations.
• Analyze contemporary Queer movements and politics.
• Apply learning to contexts outside the classroom.

**Baccalaureate Core Difference, Power, and Discrimination (DPD) Outcomes**
*This course participates in the Baccalaureate Core category for Difference, Power, and Discrimination.* By the end of this course you should be able to:

• Explain how difference is socially constructed.
• Using historical and contemporary examples, describe how perceived differences, combined with unequal distribution of power across economic, social, and political institutions, result in discrimination.
• Analyze ways in which the interactions of social categories, such as race, ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and age, are related to difference, power, and discrimination in the United States.

**WHAT WE’LL DO**
We will read, discuss, write, imagine, and create. This course is designed to challenge you on a number of levels. I do not expect you to agree with or feel comfortable with every aspect of this course. I do, however, expect you to engage critically with these texts, your own writing, and the wider cultures in which you live. It is my expectation that all of us (including myself) will be challenged in new ways.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

**BOOKS**


**Textbook:** NOTE: For textbook accuracy, please check the textbook list at the OSU Bookstore website ([http://osubeeaverstore.com/](http://osubeeaverstore.com/)). Sample syllabi may not have the most up-to-date information.
Students can also click the OSU Beaver Store link above the QS 262 or WGSS 262 course information in the Ecampus schedule of classes for textbook information and ordering.

SELECTIONS & ESSAYS
Aguilar, Delia D. “Tracing the Roots of Intersectionality.”
http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2012/agualrar20124.html
Anzaldúa, Gloria. Cherríe Moraga. Eds. This Bridge Called My Back. Preface (xiii-xix);
The Bridge Poem (xxi-xxii); Introduction (xxiii-xxvi); “Children Passing in the Streets” (3-5);
“For the Color of my Mother” (12-13); “Dreams of Violence” (16-17); “He Saw” (18-19);
Entering the Lives of Others: Theory in the Flesh” (21-23); “La Guera” (27-34); “Gee, You
Don’t Look Like an Indian from the Reservation” (46-52); “I Walk in the History of my
People” (57); “And When You Leave, Take Your Pictures with You” (60-64): “I Don’t
Understand Those who have Turned Away from Me” (68-70); “Between the Lines” (105-
106); “Across the Kitchen Table” (113-127); “Lesbianism: An Act of Resistance” (128-137);
“Letter to Ma” (140-147); “I Come with No Illusions” (148-149); “I Paid Very Hard for my
Immigrant Ignorance” (150-156); “Earth-Lover, Survivor, Musician” (157-159); “El Mundo
Zurdo: The Vision” (193-196); “A Black Feminist Statement” (210-218); “O.K. Momma,
Who the Hell Am I?” (221-231); “Revolution: It’s Not Neat or Pretty or Quick” (238-242).
http://fuckyeahradicalliterature.tumblr.com/post/734662461/book-this-bridge-called-my-
back.
Foucault, Michel. ‘We ‘Other Victorians.’” 3-13. The History of Sexuality: Volume I.
http://www.glaad.org/reference/lgb
http://www.glaad.org/reference/transgender
Hutchins, Loraine. Lani Kaahumanu. “Glossary,” “hapa haole wahine,”
(http://www.lanjkahamanu.com/hapahaole.shtml); “Myths/realities of bisexuality” (12-13),
Bi Any Other Name: Bisexual People Speak Out.
Intersex Initiative. “FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions).”
http://www.intersexinitiative.org/articles/intersex-faq.html
Koyama, Emi. “Interrogating the Politics of Commonality: Building a
Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Alliance.”
http://www.intersexinitiative.org/articles/yale-keynote.html
Kramer, Larry. “1,112 and Counting.”
http://querrrhetorctic.com/2010/03/14/1112-and-counting/
Sommerville, Siobhan B. “Queer.”
FILMS

- *Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt*. http://media.oregonstate.edu/media//0_yo8ikfvyw
- *A Litany for Survival*. http://media.oregonstate.edu/media//0_tagu1p0y
- *Question of Equality: Outrage '69*. http://media.oregonstate.edu/media//0_4qrdu5pa

ASSIGNMENTS & PROJECTS

Terminology, Vocabulary, and Language
In week one you will conduct a web search on language used in LGBTQ movements and write a reflection on it to turn in at the end of the week. Instructions in week one folder.
(10 points)

CRITICAL RESPONSES
Every week you will have a critical response due to synthesize your assigned readings. Critical responses (CRs) should be brief and pithy, 600 words, and may not exceed one single-spaced page. These are not reflections—they are meant to demonstrate your engagement with the subject matter, your own experiences with it, draw connections between the readings and class activities, and relate it to your own lives both inside and outside the university. (10 points each, 90 points total).

PARTICIPATION POINTS: DISCUSSION BOARD
The Discussion Board will be the primary way you convey your thoughts, ideas and opinions to your peers. Each week, you will engage with your classmates about the topics of the week. I will post at least one topic question each week. 35 points each, 350 points total.

PORTFOLIOS
You will have three major projects during the quarter to help you develop your skills in writing and critical thinking. Portfolio #2 and your Final Portfolio must be accompanied by a brief reflection (1.5-3 pages, double-spaced) on the learning that you developed through the project. Each portfolio, then, must contain: your rough draft(s), your final drafts, and (when required) your reflections. You will not receive credit unless the portfolios are complete.

Portfolio #1: Autobiography (Theory in the Flesh)
In *This Bridge Called My Back*, Anzaldúa and Moraga speak of “a theory in the flesh” in which “the physical realities of our lives...all fuse to create a politic born out of necessity.” With a particular focus on sexual orientation and gender identity, this project asks you to practice “theory in the flesh” by writing about your own personal experiences and social locations. 3-4 pp double-spaced. 100 points.

Portfolio #2: Media Analysis
This project asks you to examine how LGBTQ people and communities are portrayed in the media. You may choose any genre (advertisement, movie, music video, song, TV show, news program, etc). Discuss what impact that representation has on public discourse about LGBTQ people, communities, and movements. 4-6 pages. A brief reflection on your learning (1.5-3 pages) will accompany the project. 100 points.

Final Portfolio
Your final project asks you to choose a topic within Queer Studies, engage in research around this topic, and create a project that you can implement outside of this classroom. For instance, you might...
decide to create a podcast about LGBTQ issues, design a workshop for a campus or off-campus event, or write a song about an historical event. It can be anything you would like to do, as long as it focuses remains within Queer Studies. The purpose of this assignment is for you to apply classroom learning to a context outside of this class. This assignment asks you to focus on a particular audience, for a particular purpose, and within a clear context of production.

Your final will have the following components:

1. A brief proposal on your project.
2. A brief presentation on your project. (150 points).
3. Your project, including a works cited page, and a reflection of your project (150 points).
4. A reflection on your learning for the entire course. (50 points).

Classroom Conduct and Citizenship

(DIS)ABILITY ACCESS
As an instructor, I am fully committed to ensuring that this space is accessible to people with (dis)abilities.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) POLICY STATEMENT
Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 737-4098.

Community and Professional Responsibility

GROUND RULES AND EXPECTATIONS
As a student, you are a part of a professional community. You have a responsibility to yourself in your own education. You also have a responsibility to your community. Therefore, you should be aware of how your actions impact those around you.

The following are ground rules and expectations for the class:

- Mutual Respect: Perhaps the most important aspect of your community and professional responsibility is respect. Treat each other and me with respect at all times. All of us should feel free to express our thoughts and opinions openly, without fear of penalty, as long as we do so in a courteous way. Also, please do not speak while others are speaking and do not engage in side-conversations.

- Challenge: Challenge is a central expectation of this class, and means a number of things. Be open to thinking about writing, language, and society in new ways. Challenge yourself to both "move up" or "move back." This means, notice how much verbal space you take up in class. If you are the kind of person who takes up a lot of verbal space, challenge yourself to "move back" to leave room for others. If you are the kind of person who doesn’t speak much in class, challenge yourself to "move up." This space should be one in which we all have the opportunity to participate.
• **Confidentiality:** This is a class that focuses on stories. Personal stories and information are sometimes shared in the classroom or in projects shared with co-learners. Those stories, told or written, remain the property of their teller. Do not bring those stories or personal information, no matter how insignificant it may appear to you, outside of the classroom space without asking permission from the teller.

• **Safety:** As much as possible, this classroom should be safe for all participants. Therefore, hateful behavior or language, for any reason, will not be allowed.

**TURNING IN WORK**
Work will be due on the day it is due. Unless otherwise specified, turn in all work on Blackboard. **Do not email me your assignments unless I ask you to do so or if there are problems with Blackboard.**

**Evaluation of Student Performance: Grading and Grades**
The grading system consists of twelve basic grades, A, A−, B+, B, B−, C+, C, C−, D+, D, D−, and F. The grade of A denotes exceptional accomplishment; B, superior; C, average; D, inferior; F, failure.

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<td>B+</td>
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**PLAGIARISM**
Plagiarism covers a wide range of activities, some of which you may know about and others that may surprise you. The most obvious forms of plagiarism include buying papers/projects online or other places, cutting and pasting from the Internet, and using another writer’s ideas or words without giving proper credit (citing). Any time you quote, you need to cite. Even paraphrasing should include a citation. Plagiarism also includes having someone else write a paper for you. Any form of plagiarism is a serious academic offense and may result in a failing grade on the assignment or the course, and has serious academic consequences at OSU and other universities.

In addition to classroom expectations and policies, please read OSU’s **Statement of Expectations for Student Conduct**: [http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/feature-stories/student-conduct-code](http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/feature-stories/student-conduct-code)

**Services and Resources**
Asia & Pacific Cultural Center: [http://oregonstate.edu/apcc/](http://oregonstate.edu/apcc/)
Centro Cultural César Chávez: [http://oregonstate.edu/cccc/](http://oregonstate.edu/cccc/)
Counseling & Psychological Services: [http://oregonstate.edu/counsel/](http://oregonstate.edu/counsel/)
Emergency Food Pantry: [http://oregonstate.edu/hsrc/emergency-food-pantry](http://oregonstate.edu/hsrc/emergency-food-pantry)
Intercultural Student Services: http://oregonstate.edu/dept/iss/
International Student Advising & Services: http://oregonstate.edu/international/atosu/students
Lonnie B. Harris Black Cultural Center: http://oregonstate.edu/bcc/
Native American Longhouse: http://oregonstate.edu/nal/
Pride Center: http://oregonstate.edu/pridecenter/
Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Survivor Services: http://www.wildlifestewards.4h.orst.edu/cla/women_studies/sexual-assault-and-domestic-violence-survivor-services
Women's Center: http://oregonstate.edu/womenscenter/

Student Evaluation of Teaching
We encourage you to engage in the course evaluation process each term – online, of course. The evaluation form will be available toward the end of each term, and you will be sent instructions through ONID. You will login to “Student Online Services” to respond to the online questionnaire. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted.

**NOTE to prospective students:** This syllabus is intended to provide students who are considering taking this course an idea of what they will be learning. A more detailed syllabus will be available on the course Blackboard site for enrolled students and may be more current than this sample syllabus.