

Spring 2012

LGBT 220

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Recommended Citation

Valente, Kenneth G., "LGBT 220" (2012). *Faculty Syllabi*. Paper 9.
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LGBT 220 Lives, Communities, and Modes of Critical Inquiry: An Exploration in LGBTQ Studies
Spring 2012
MW 1.20-2.35 | ALANA Multipurpose Room

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Office hours: TBA by Week 2

Course Information

Course description | LGBT 220 is designed to explore the lives, experiences, and representations of LGBTQ persons, those who identify or are identified as transgressive in terms of their sexuality and/or gender expression. Although particular emphases may vary from semester to semester, topics typically consider LGBTQ communities and families, cultures, and subcultures; histories, institutions, and literatures; and/or economic and political lives. Selected topics also serve to expose complex cultural forces that continue to shape sexuality and regulate its various expressions. The course is intended to promote the examination of new theories and methodologies in relation to established disciplines as it underscores the generation of new knowledge within traditional fields of scholarship.

This semester, the course will adopt histories and historical scholarship as ways of exploring LGBTQ Studies. The intersection of these areas is rich with questions: What is LGBTQ Studies and what can its perspectives contribute to historical discourses? What motives and methodologies shape historical research within LGBTQ Studies? What particular concerns are related to such undertakings? To what extent can the past inform the present regarding the lives and experiences of LGBTQ identified persons as well as our understanding of human sexuality in its many manifestations?

Moodle | This outline as well as other information regarding office hours and this course will be available on the course's Moodle website. You'll need to visit this site regularly throughout the semester.

Course objectives | In this course students will

- consider the extent to which historiography serves different purposes and audiences
- be challenged to query unspoken assumptions that may affect our perceptions of the past and present
- develop a vocabulary that finds purchase in LGBTQ scholarship or any disciplinary inquiry that adopts sexuality or gender expression as an analytic category
- gain experience in locating and assessing scholarship that relates LGBTQ considerations to other disciplinary knowledges

Course requirements and attendance policies | Course requirements includes

- Two short written assignments (approximately 1500 words each, 15% each)
- One long written assignment (approximately 3500 words, 35%)
- Final (self-scheduled) exam (15%)
- Contributions to the class and Moodle discussions (20%)

Short writing assignments (approximately 250 words each) may be assigned in advance of and in association with particular class discussions.

Each student is granted two [2] absences. Unexcused absences beyond these will result in a course grade reduction of one level (e.g. B to B-) for each occurrence.

To ensure full attention to discussions and other activities, cellphones and laptops must be switched off and put away during class sessions.

Required texts and supplementary readings | This semester's required texts are

Abelove, Henry, Michele Aina Barale, and David M. Halperin, editors. *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge, 1993. (ISBN 0-415-90519-2)

Chauncey, George. *Gay New York: The Making of the Gay Male World, 1890 – 1940*. New York: BasicBooks, 1994. (ISBN 0-465-02621-4)

D'Emilio, John and Estelle B. Freedman. *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. (ISBN 0-226-14264-7)

Supplementary readings, essentially all of which are available as electronic resources, will be selected from other texts and peer-reviewed journals. Full bibliographic citations can be found on the Moodle course website. Additional readings may be added.

Tentative schedule of topics and requirements | Weekly course outlines are maintained on the Moodle course website. You should consult this frequently as it is subject to change. The following gives a brief and tentative overview of the semester, including three events scheduled outside of class time.

Weeks 1 – 2: Scholarship in LGBTQ history and its relationships to LGBTQ Studies

Weeks 2 – 5: Reclamation, recuperation, and reorientation: Reading and writing historical scholarship in LGBTQ Studies

You'll be expected to contribute to a Moodle discussion.

A required Women's Studies Brown Bag presentation is scheduled for Thursday, 9 February, 11.30-12.45. Additional information will be provided.

The first short written assignment, an analytic response essay, will be collected by the end of Week 5. Details on this assignment will be provided.

Weeks: 5 – 9: The history of sexuality in America

You'll be expected to contribute to a Moodle discussion.

A required outside event is scheduled for the afternoon Saturday, 3 March, which will last approximately 2.5 hours. Additional information will be provided.

A required, outside lecture is scheduled for Thursday, 22 March. Additional information will be provided.

Weeks 10 – 13: History, place, and experience

The second short written assignment will be collected at the end of Week 10. Details on this assignment will be provided.

You'll be expected to contribute to a Moodle discussion.

Weeks 14 – 15: The particular history of modern scientific research into homosexuality

Week 15: Concluding thoughts on history and LGBTQ Studies

The long written assignment will be collected by the last day of classes (that is, no later than Friday, 4 May). Details on this assignment will be provided.

Preparing for and contributing to class discussions | Typically our sessions will be dedicated to discussing topics relevant to the reading(s) set for the session. I expect you to come prepared for a discussion. Though I may wish to pursue particular concerns, you should always ask yourself the following questions by way of preparation.

- What is the author's thesis/intent?
- What evidence, perspective, and/or theoretical framework underpin the author's argument/development in relation to this thesis/intent?
- What parts are particularly compelling? What, if anything, is missing from the argument and/or development?
- What have you gained from the reading? What questions does it raise? How does the reading extend, complement, contradict, or exemplify materials/themes from this or other courses?

In the second half of the semester, students working together in groups may be asked to lead a class discussion.

Moodle discussions | You'll be expected to contribute to three online discussions that will take place during the semester. These will be described and executed on the Moodle course website.

An important note regarding course discussions | Readings and discussions related to this course will doubtlessly involve subjects or language that some might find controversial, difficult, or problematic. However, as a course that explores the history of sexuality, it would be futile to try to avoid such. At the same time, I want to encourage everyone to contribute to our conversations, regardless of individual sensitivities or intellectual positions. We have much to learn from one another.

Mindful of these realities, I expect us all to establish and maintain an appropriate level of mutual respect in all discussions.

Academic support | If you feel you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. If you have not already done so, please contact Lynn Waldman at the Office of Academic Support and Disability Services in the Center for Learning, Teaching, and Research.

Administrative dates | The last day you can add or drop a course is Wednesday 1 February. The last day that you can withdraw from a course with a W is Friday 28 March.