

AML 2410 Section 3698: Issues in American Literature and Culture Fall 2010

Introduction to Queer Theory and Literature

Instructor: Lyndsay Brown

Class: MWF 8 (3:00-3:50) MAT 0051

Email: viautah@ufl.edu

Office Hours: TUR 4323 F 5-7 and by appointment

Course Website: <http://plaza.ufl.edu/viautah/AML2410Fall10.html>

Course Description

As stated in the title, this course offers an introduction to queer theory and literature in the American 20th Century. Our focus will alternate between theory – which both engages and clarifies significant historical, political, social, and sexual issues as they affect real people – and literature, with the aim of applying concepts to their expression in fiction. While it would be impossible to fully cover the field in a single semester (YA literature, for example, is excluded), seminal texts have been selected in order to offer a survey of lines of thought and feeling that continue to affect the present.

At its core, this course will attempt to raise questions about the formation of identity, whether one's sense of self is consistent throughout life, the meaning and origin of social roles, the relevance of sexual practices to one's self-definition, and the intersection of the personal and the political. No prior background or personal interest in the topic of the course is required; however, students should be aware that an open mind and a willingness to discuss complex and potentially uncomfortable issues will be necessary.

Course Goals

There are three primary goals for the course. First, for students to gain an introduction to a particular field of literature, and to gain valuable experience in reading texts critically, in order to compose persuasive, well-supported, and insightful arguments. Second, students will learn to actively engage, unpack, and apply academic theory in the service of their own writing. Finally, students will be expected to view the texts and discussions within the complex literary, social, and cultural context that affects both their reading and reception, and to experience what it means to participate in the continuing discourse of the field.

The student learning outcomes for this course are as detailed in the Undergraduate Catalog at <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggened.html#requirements>.

Texts

Baldwin, James. *Giovanni's Room*.

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble*.

Cunningham, Michael. *The Hours*.

Feinberg, Leslie. *Stone Butch Blues*.

Halberstam, Judith. *In A Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*.

Isherwood, Christopher. *A Single Man*.

Laqueur, Thomas. *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*.

Rich, Adrienne. "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence." Essay available in PDF form via the course website.

Russ, Joanna. *The Female Man*.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. "Introduction." *Epistemology of the Closet*. Essay available in PDF form via the course website.

Assignments

Daily Note Cards

At the beginning of each class (after add/drop), students will submit an index card containing a response to a question offered by the instructor – questions for the week will be available on the course website each Sunday. Students must write legibly, using only one side of the card (and including enough space for the student's name as well as the author being discussed, i.e. cards for Week 2 may be labeled Sedgwick 1, Sedgwick 2, etc.), and must use a quote from the reading in their answer. Note cards demonstrate participation as well as preparation, and may often serve as inspiration for class discussion. Note cards will not be required for lecture or peer review dates. They will be scored on a check minus, check, and check plus scale.

Paper 1 Due 10/6

The first paper is a short précis (written commentary, unpacking, and explication) of a single quote from Rich or Sedgwick. Students may use examples from other course texts, as well as outside texts, but the focus must be on analyzing and exploring every nuance in a single short piece of theory (approximately 1-10 sentences). All paper assignments will be discussed in class prior to Peer Review, and assignment sheets offering further details will be provided. (5 pages)

Paper 2 Due 11/17

Having already considered theory in isolation, this paper requires students to apply a single theoretical concept to a single novel, tracing not simply its presence, but whether the concept works, according to the fictional narrative. (6-7 pages)

Paper 3 Due 12/8

Students will compose a paper on an instructor-approved topic of choice that includes an examination of both theory and literature. Outside texts are encouraged, along with topics that include other social contexts, such as race, class, or gender, as long as focus remains on themes from the course. (8 pages)

Peer Review

On the dates marked for peer review, you must bring a completed draft of your work to class, and be prepared to critique that of your peers. Absences on peer review days will affect your participation grade, as will neglecting to bring a full draft.

Presentation

Students will prepare a short (10 minute) presentation on an author from a list provided by the professor. An outline of the presentation must be submitted to the instructor in written form prior to the presentation. Students are encouraged to use media (clips, websites) in their presentations; presentations consisting entirely of PowerPoint are not allowed.

Presentations will be graded by evaluating four elements: submitted presentation outline, presentation content, performance, and fulfillment of presentation requirements (historical background, social context, survey of significant work, etc.).

Course Policies

Assignment Formatting

All papers must be word processed in 12-point Times New Roman and double-spaced with 1" margins on all sides. Format, citations, and documentation must follow MLA style. **Put your name, due date, and assignment in the top left corner of all assignments.** Include the page number in the top right of each page, and title your submissions. When work is submitted electronically, the student's last name must be included in the filename. Attempts to pad paper length with overly generous fonts or margins will result in an unprofessional appearance, and your grade will be affected. Papers that are longer than the stated number of pages will not be penalized; however, work must meet the minimum page requirement in order to receive a passing grade.

Attendance

Because much of our work depends upon group discussion of the texts, you should plan to attend every class session. Prolonged absences, even for medical reasons, will not be excused. You may miss up to four classes without penalty EXCEPT that you will lose credit for whatever in-class work you miss. Tuesday class sessions count for two absences. **Every absence over the allowed four will reduce your overall grade by 50 points (½ of a letter grade).**

Tardiness, like sporadic absences, disrupts the class. Of course, you should come to class on time. If you do arrive late, please come in as quietly as possible and begin work quickly. I understand that lateness is occasionally unavoidable, and thus have no specific policy to penalize for being tardy, but I will speak with you if it becomes a problem. Inform me as early as possible in advance if you will miss class due to a university-approved reason (i.e. varsity athletics, etc.). Similarly, you should inform me in advance if you will miss class to observe a religious holiday. Your first absences (for whatever reason) will count toward your "allowed" ones. If you have a learning disability, hardship, or other special dispensation approved by the Office of Student Affairs, please meet with me to discuss your requirements as early in the term as possible.

Conduct

Students are expected to behave respectfully and professionally when interacting with their instructor and fellow students, whether during discussion, screenings, or via email. Failure to comply with these guidelines will result in a grade of failing and/or dismissal from the class or both.

Conferences

I encourage you to make an appointment to see me during my office hours, especially when you have questions about an assignment, need help with a particular writing problem, want extra feedback on a draft, or have questions about my comments on your work.

Content

This class may cover material that can be considered offensive. Some of the texts you will be asked to analyze may contain material that is racially, politically, religiously, or sexually controversial. If you are unable or unwilling to participate in mature discussion about material that makes you uncomfortable or even offends you, and will not engage in discussion that goes beyond the simple fact of whether or not you personally were offended, this is not the class for you, and you are recommended to drop the course. Substitute materials will not be provided.

Contesting Grades

If a student has a complaint about a grade on a single assignment, it should be discussed with the instructor, neither the Director of Writing Programs nor the Chair. A student whose complaints have accumulated and is sure his or her final grade will be lower than desired is to fill out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant. A faculty committee will review the student's work for the semester, and decide on a grade. Their decision is final. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade..

Deadlines

Late assignments **will not be accepted** unless the student has made specific arrangements with the instructor prior to the submission of the late work. As all work is due by midnight via email, it would be in your best interest to send your documents no later than 11:30 PM.

E-Mail and Course Website

Students are expected to regularly check their University of Florida e-mail account and the course website—regularly here means email at least once every 24 hours, and the website at least twice per week. Students should not expect the instructor to possess a bioport, psychic powers, or the magical ability to remain in constant contact with the computer; thus, students are asked not to complain that the instructor does not reply to email at once. Course grades cannot, due to University policy, be conveyed via email. Should you have questions or concerns about your grade, set up a conference with the instructor.

Electronic Devices

No cell phones, handhelds, iPhones, or gadgets of any kind will be tolerated; turn these devices off before class begins, and do not use them. The instructor reserves the right to require those who break this rule to leave the classroom, which will count as a day's absence, even if happens in the last five minutes of the period. In the event of a personal situation that requires your cell phone to be on, please notify me before class.

Students are free to use laptop computers and other portable electronic devices in class for the purposes of taking notes during discussion or for in-class presentations. WWW browsing, emailing, chatting, etc. unrelated to class activities is, however, inappropriate and will not be tolerated. In the event of a violation of this policy, I reserve the right to prohibit the use of all electronic devices in class by individual students and/or the class as a whole.

Harassment

Every student in this class is expected to participate in a responsible and mature manner that enhances education. Any conduct that disrupts the learning process may lead to disciplinary action. Because this course requires much contact, collaboration, and dialogue among students, it is essential that each student work to create an environment of respect and tolerance.

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041>

Personal Student Concerns

At times, students face personal problems that I am unable to help them with. At some point during the semester, you may find that you need assistance with stress management, time management, relationships, depression, family illness, or abuse. If this occurs, please visit <http://oss.ufl.edu/stg/> (for the online guide) or call the Counseling Center at 392-1575. Please do not feel as if you are alone on this campus; there are people devoted helping you with these concerns.

Quizzes

I will occasionally give unannounced quizzes on the readings at the beginning of class. These quizzes cannot be made up if you are absent or late. Quizzes count as part of the participation grade.

Rewrite/Revision Policy

I will accept the revision of one major assignment, which is due by the last day of classes. The final grade will be an average of the first and second grades that the assignment receives.

Statement on Academic Dishonesty

All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. The policy in this course is that one case of plagiarism on a single assignment is grounds for receiving no credit for that assignment; should plagiarism occur a second time, the student will fail the course.

For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

Statement of Composition (C) or Humanities (H) Credit

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggened.html>

Statement of Student Disability Services

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Statement of Gordon Rule Requirements

This course can satisfy the UF requirement for Writing. For more information, see: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggordon.html>

Submission

All work must be submitted via e-mail by midnight (12 AM EST) the day it is due. I will not accept computer-related excuses for late work after the second week of class. It is wise to make a printout of all submitted work and to have said printouts on hand in the event that a dispute over your grades arises.

Grading*Grade Issues*

I will not consider questions about grades during class time or via email. If you have a question about a grade on your paper you may schedule an appointment to meet with me and discuss the grade.

Grade Scale

UF has recently instituted minus grades. As a result, letter grades now have different grade point equivalencies. For more information, see:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>

A:	93-100	C:	73-76
A-:	90-92	C-:	70-72
B+:	87-89	D+:	67-69
B:	83-86	D:	63-66
B-:	80-82	D-:	60-62
C+:	77-79	E:	0-59

Grade Meanings

Here is the meaning behind the grades I assign to your papers; you can use these statements to determine how you might work toward a higher grade:

- A You did what the assignment asked for at a high quality level, and your work shows originality and creativity. Work in this range shows all the qualities listed below for a B, but it also demonstrates that you took extra steps to be original or creative in developing content, solving a problem, or developing a style. Since careful editing and proofreading are essential in writing, papers in the A range must be free of typos and grammatical or mechanical errors.
- B You did what the assignment asked of you at a high quality level. Work in this range needs revision; however, it is complete in content, is organized well, and shows special attention to style.
- C You did what the assignment asked of you. Work in this range needs significant revision, but it is complete in content and the organization is logical. The style is straightforward but unremarkable.
- D You neglected some basic requirements of the assignment, and completed it at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. The content is often incomplete and the organization is hard to discern. Attention to style is often nonexistent or chaotic.
- E An E is usually reserved for people who don't do the work or don't come to class. However, if your work is shoddy and shows little understanding of the needs of the assignment, you will receive a failing grade.

Grade Percentage Breakdown

Presentation:	100 points
Note cards:	150 points
Participation:	150 points
Paper One:	150 points
Paper Two:	200 points
Paper Three:	250 points
Total:	1000 points

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

I reserve the right to change this schedule as necessary.

Week 1

M 8/23: Introduction

W 8/25: *Lecture: Queer Art: History and Politics*

F 8/27: *Lecture: Working with Theory*

Week 2

M 8/30: Sedgwick 1-20

W 9/1: Sedgwick 21-40

F 9/3: Sedgwick 41-63

Week 3

M 9/6: Labor Day – No Class

W 9/8: Baldwin 1-71

F 9/10: No Class

Week 4

M 9/13: Baldwin 72-118

W 9/15: Baldwin 119-end

F 9/17: Rich

Week 5

M 9/20: Rich

W 9/22: Feinberg 1-73

F 9/24: *Lecture: Writing the Academic Paper*

Week 6

M 9/27: Feinberg 74-153

W 9/29: Feinberg 154-220

F 10/1: No Class

Week 7

M 10/4: **Peer Review: Draft of Paper 1 Due**

W 10/6: *Lecture: Freud, Psychoanalysis, and the Queer Body*

Paper 1 Due

F 10/8: Feinberg 121-end

Week 8

M 10/11: Butler vii-44

W 10/13: Butler 45-101

F 10/15: Homecoming – No Class

Week 9

M 10/18: Butler 163-190

W 10/20: No Class
F 10/22: Butler continued

Week 10

M 10/25: Russ 1-56
W 10/27: Russ 57-104
F 10/29: Russ 105-156

Week 11

M 11/1: Russ 156-end
W 11/3: Laqueur 1-62
F 11/5: Laqueur 63-148

Week 12

M 11/8: Laqueur 149-192
W 11/10: Laqueur 193-244
F 11/12: **Peer Review: Draft of Paper 2 Due**

Week 13

M 11/15: Isherwood 1-60
W 11/17: Isherwood 61-120
Paper 2 Due
F 11/19: Isherwood 121-end

Week 14

M 11/22: Halberstam 1-46
W 11/24: Halberstam 47-56, 76-96
F 11/26: No Class – Thanksgiving Break

Week 15

M 11/29: Halberstam 125-end
W 12/1: The Hours 3-87
F 12/3: The Hours 88-162

Week 16

M 12/6: The Hours 163-end
W 12/8: Wrap Up
Paper 3 Due

Syllabus Signature Page
University of Florida

Instructor: Lyndsay Brown
Course: AML 2410 Section 3698
Semester: Fall 2010

I hereby affirm the following:

that I received a copy of the course syllabus for AML 2410
that I have read and understand its contents, including all policies and requirements
that these policies may be altered by the instructor, but I will be given notice in class and
via the website should they be so altered
that I understand that any special provisions or accommodations must be presented in
advance of any deadlines
and that any accommodations will not be granted retroactively.

Full Name (Print)

Signature

Date