

**Syllabus**  
**WMST 491, Section 001**  
**(SOC 490, Section 001)**  
**Introduction to Sexual Diversity Studies**

**Instructor:** Kylan Mattias de Vries  
**Course date/time:** TR 9:35 – 10:50 a.m.  
**Course location:** Parkinson 107  
**Office:** WMST Department – 913 S. Oakland  
**Office Hours:** TR 11:30 – 2:30 PM or by appointment  
**Phone:** 618-453-5141 (WMST) or 618-453-7620 (Sociology)  
**E-mail:** kylan33@siu.edu  
**Blackboard:** <https://mycourses.siu.edu>

**Course Description:**

This course will introduce you to studies in sexual diversity across various disciplines. The course consists of three main units, and is highly interdisciplinary. We will begin with the terms and concepts utilized in sexual diversity studies. Next we will examine the major disciplinary approaches to the study of sexual diversity. This includes an historical analysis of sex, sexuality, and gender, as well as the intersection of race, social class, and ability. The final unit will investigate the application of different approaches to sexual diversity studies. Included in this will be the exploration of Queer Theory from two broad perspectives. First, we will examine queer theory in terms of sexual identity and sexual politics. Second, we will explore the theoretical and empirical applications of queer theory; in other words, queering theory. Some of the questions we will examine in this course include: How and why have the concepts of “sex” and “sexuality” changed over time? What are the various research and theoretical approaches to the study of sexual diversity? How do gender, race, and social class intersect with conceptions of sexuality? Why is it beneficial to examine normative concepts, structures, and theories through a “queer” lens?

This course is a requirement for the Sexual Diversity Studies emphasis in Women’s Studies. For more information, please contact Dr. Joan McDermott.

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Understanding the fundamental concepts and theories in sexual diversity studies from an interdisciplinary approach.
2. Appreciate and think critically about current research and theoretical works across disciplines in the field of sexual diversity.
3. Appreciate and think critically about relationships between sexuality, sex, gender, race, class, and ability; as well as “normative” concepts and theories.

**Required Books:**

Seidman, Steven. 2003. *The Social Construction of Sexuality*. NY: W.W. Norton & Company.

**Required Articles:**

Each week, a number of articles are assigned and will be available on Blackboard.

**Online Resources:** <http://www.queertheory.com/>  
<http://www.glweb.com/RainbowQuery/Index.html>

### **Course Format:**

Lectures, readings, class discussions, audio-visual media, films, blackboard discussions, and potential guest speakers.

### **Ground Rules for this course\*:**

- 1) Acknowledge that racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia exist.
- 2) Acknowledge that one of the meanings of racism/sexism is that we have been systematically taught misinformation about our own group and especially members of other groups.
- 3) We cannot be blamed for the misinformation we have learned, but we will be held responsible for repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
- 4) Victims are not to be blamed for their oppression.
- 5) We will assume that people are always doing the best they can.
- 6) We will actively pursue information about our own group and those of others.
- 7) We will share information about our own group with other members of the class and we will NEVER demean, devalue, or in any way “put down” people for their experiences.
- 8) We each have an obligation to actively combat the myths and stereotypes about our own group and other groups so that we can break down the walls which prohibit group cooperation and group gain.
- 9) We want to create a safe atmosphere for open discussion. Thus, at times, members of the class may wish to make a comment that they do not want repeated outside of the classroom. If so, the student will preface her or his remarks with a request and the class will agree not to repeat the remarks.

\* Adopted from Lynn Weber, Center for Research on Women, University of Memphis.

### **Course Requirements and Grading**

1. **In-Class Exam (15%, 150 points)**: We will have one (1) in-class exam based on the first unit of the course. The examination may be composed of multiple choice, true-false, short answer or essay questions or any combination thereof. It will include materials contained in the required readings, provided in lecture, discussed on blackboard, and/or materials presented by guest speakers. The mere fact that materials assigned are not discussed in class *does not* eliminate that material from the examination. Makeup examinations ***must*** be taken within one week following the administration of the in-class examination. Makeup examinations will be given ***only*** if you are out of class because of personal illness (accompanied by documentation from a physician), illness and/or death of an immediate family member, or you have to be away on university business accompanied by a letter from the person in charge of your need to be away. If you do not complete the makeup examination within that time frame you will receive a grade of “0” for that examination. The exam will be on Tuesday, Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> of Week 5.
2. **Short Essay (15%, 150 points)**: There will be one (1) paper on a topic handed out by the instructor, based on the second section of the course. This essay must be typed, double-spaced, times new roman font, 3-4 pages in length with 1 inch margins. You may use ASA, APA, or MLA format. (Please see the note on Academic Honesty below.) This essay will be handed out Tuesday, Feb. 24<sup>th</sup> of week 7 and are due on Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> of week 10.

3. **Final Project (20%, 200 points):** Meet with me by Thursday, Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> of week 6 to decide on your final project. A 2-3 page project proposal is due in class on Thursday, March 5<sup>th</sup> of week 8. The proposal should outline what you plan to do and how it relates to the course. You may use this in your final project.  
Your final project should be 15-20 pages in length, in ASA, APA, or MLA format. Do not begin the paper until you talk with me about the character and format. The Final Projects are due by the day of the final exam. You may do:
  - (1) A literature review of works beyond what is assigned in class.
  - (2) A research paper, utilizing readings from the course.
  - (3) A film, performance, play, or short story. You will need to provide a written paper on how the creative work relates to the course and readings.
  - (4) If you have another idea for an alternative final project come talk to me first. (Do not begin without discussing this with me first.)
  
4. **Reading Assignments:** Required readings are listed for each week; in addition, I have listed optional recommended readings if you would like to pursue a particular topic.
  
5. **Discussion Leader (10%, 100 points):** You will lead one (1) class discussion on the required readings for that day. A sign up sheet will be passed around in the first week. You may also utilize the blackboard discussion postings for the readings; but you must include your own questions.
  
6. **Blackboard Discussion Board (10%, 100 points):** After reading for each class, respond to at least one question provided on the Blackboard Discussion Board, and respond to at least one comment from a fellow student and/or write your own question. The questions provided by the instructor are there to assist in your understanding of the material, and to encourage further discussion in the classroom. I expect you to respond a minimum of 20 times during the semester; posting beyond these minimums will positively affect your participation grade. You must post the week the readings are due, and can not make these up later in the semester. The cut off for each weeks reading is Friday 3pm.
  
7. **Class Participation (30%, 300 points):** I expect you to attend each class and participate in discussion in an informed manner. Part of your participation grade will include:
  - Pop in-class assignments.
  - Attendance to the movie “Saving Face” to be shown outside of class time. If you can not make the set time, please talk to me about alternative arrangements.
  - Short presentation of final projects.

**Extra Credit:** I will occasionally provide extra credit assignments; these must be turned in within a week of the event to receive credit.

**Grading Scale:**      **A: 895 – 1000+**                      **F: 594 or less**  
                                  **B: 795 - 894**  
                                  **C: 695 - 794**

**D: 595 - 694**

## **Other Stuff**

### **Expectations in the Classroom:**

I encourage and expect classroom discussion. Each of you can bring a unique perspective to the class, and I encourage you to share your thoughts, experiences, and beliefs. We will be covering a diverse range of topics, this means we will hear many different perspectives, all of which contribute to the course, and our understanding of how what we learn applies to the world. You have a responsibility to communicate in a respectful manner. Even though you may not agree with a classmate's opinions, respect their differences, we can learn from it. I encourage us all to critically think about what we learn and communicate; however, it is unacceptable to be rude, hostile, or demeaning towards a classmate.

Distractions are just that, they do affect the entire class. Some of these distractions include cell phones, eating, listening to music, sleeping (you may snore), reading a newspaper, being online, playing a game, coming in late or leaving early. Not only are these a distraction to the entire class, I find them personally disrespectful. If you must come in late or leave early, let me know ahead of time.

### **Academic Honesty:**

As I mentioned, I will not tolerate plagiarism; therefore please read this carefully, and if you have any questions ask me before hand. Plagiarism means using someone else's work and saying it is yours. If you use work from someone else be sure to cite it. That means (1) if you are directly quoting them (more than 3 words) put it in quotation marks and state where you took it from (see ASA, APA, or MLA styles for specifics); (2) if you are summarizing someone's work be sure to specify this (i.e. Schaeffer suggests...). It is YOUR responsibility to familiarize yourself with plagiarism, and proper citation. So what happens if you plagiarize? You could receive a zero on the assignment, a F (fail) in the course, and/or be expelled from the university.

### **Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Statement:** (<http://www.siu.edu/~dss/>)

I encourage persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations to meet with me as soon as possible, special accommodations will be arranged upon receiving documentation from the Disabled Students Services (DSS). For more information on the services provided by SIUC DSS, contact them at [DSSsiu@siu.edu](mailto:DSSsiu@siu.edu), (618) 453-5738, or TTY: (618) 453-2293 – some of these services include note takers, adapted course materials, tutorials, etc.

**Emergency Procedures:** Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and health environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT's website at [www.bert.siu.edu](http://www.bert.siu.edu), Department of Safety's website [www.dps.siu.edu](http://www.dps.siu.edu) (disaster drop down), and in Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

## COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

### WEEK/DATE TOPIC/READINGS

#### UNIT 1: FOUNDATIONS IN SEXUAL DIVERSITY STUDIES

**Week 1**      **T**      **Introduction to Key Terms & Concepts**  
**1/13 & 15**    **Th**      Plante, Rebecca F. 2006. "LGBTQQPA(H), BDSM: The Alphabet Soup of Sexualities" Pp. 195-239 in *Sexualities in Context: A Social Perspective*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Key concepts: sex, sexuality, gender, identity vs behavior

Optional:

· Kimmel, Michael S. and Rebecca F. Plante. "Classical Inquiries." Pp 3-37 in *Sexualities: Identities, Behaviors, and Society*. NY: Oxford University Press.

**Week 2**      **Heterosexual, Homosexual, Bisexual Identity**  
**1/20 & 22**    **T**      · Seidman, Steven. Part I: Theorizing Sex  
**Th**      · Seidman, Steven. Part II: The Sociology and Politics of Sexual Identity

Key concepts: Sexology, Psychoanalysis, Marxism, Feminism, Social Constructionism, heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, queer, essentialism vs. Constructionism

Optional:

· Rust, Paula C. 2001. "Too many and not enough: The meanings of bisexual identities." *Journal of Bisexuality* 1: 33-68.

**Week 3**      **Sexual Morality, and Epistemology**  
**1/27 & 29**    **T**      · Seidman, Steven. Part III: Social Conflicts over Sexual Morality  
**Th**      · de Lauretis, Teresa. 1991. "Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities: An Introduction." *Differences* 3(2): iii-xviii.

Key concepts: morality, normative, queer theory, epistemology, binary, GLBTQ (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer)

Optional:

· Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. 1990. "Epistemology of the Closet." Pp 67-90 in *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

**Week 4**      **Social Construction of "Biological" Sex and "Gender"**  
**2/3 & 5**      **T**      · Rubin, Gayle, 1975. "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex." Pp. 157-210 in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, edited by Rayna Reiter. New York: Monthly Review Press.  
**Th**      · Kessler, Suzanne J. 1990. "The Medical Construction of Gender: Case Management of Intersexed Infants." *Signs* 16(1): 3-26.

Key concepts: intersex, heteronormativity, sex/gender system

Optional:

- Foucault, Michel. 1978. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. NY: Random House. Focus on pp 81-131.
- Fausto-Sterling, Anne. 2000. "The Five Sexes: Revisited." *Sciences* 40:18-23.
- Chase, Cheryl. 2003[1998]. "Hermaphrodites with Attitude: Mapping the Emergence of Intersex Political Activism." Pp. 172-187 in *Constructing Sexualities: Readings in Sexuality, Gender, and Culture*, ed. LaFont. Prentice Hall.

**UNIT 2: MAJOR DISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO SEXUAL DIVERSITY STUDIES**

**Week 5 T In-Class Exam on Unit 1**

**2/10 & 12 Th Start of Unit 2: Science and Engineering: Biology**

- Driscoll, Emily V. 2008. "Bisexual Species." *Scientific American Mind* (19)3: 68-73.

**Week 6 Social Sciences: Sociology and Anthropology**

**2/17 & 19 T** · Bernstein, Mary. 1997. "Celebration and Suppression: The Strategic Uses of Identity by the Lesbian and Gay Movement." *American Journal of Sociology* 103(3):531-65.

**Th** · Kempadoo, Kamala. "Gender, Race and Sex: Exoticism in the Caribbean." Presented at *The Challenge of Difference: articulating gender, race and class*. Salvador, Bahia, Brazil April 2000.

Optional:

- Nanda, Serena. 1994. "Hijras: An Alternative Sex and Gender Role in Indian." Pp. 373-417 in *Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History*, edited by Gilbert Herdt. New York: Zone Books.
- Furth, Charlotte. 1988. "Androgynous Males and Deficient Females: Biology and Gender Boundaries in 16th- and 17th-Century China." *Late Imperial China* 9:1-31.

**Week 7 Humanities: English and Critical Studies**

**2/24 & 26 T Short Essay Question(s) Handed Out**

- Butler, Judith. 1993. "Imitation and Gender Insubordination." Pp. 307-320 in *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, edited by Henry Abelove, Michèle Aina Barale and David M. Halperin. New York: Routledge.

**Th** · Terry, Jennifer. 1991. "Theorizing Deviant Historiography." *Differences* 3(2): 55-74.

**Week 8 Performing and Fine Arts**

**3/3 & 5 T** · Film: "Notorious CHO" – Machado, Lorene. 2002. *Notorious C.H.O.* Cho Taussig Productions Inc.

**Th Proposal for Final Project Due**

- Chun, Elaine Wonhee. 2004. "Ideologies of legitimate mockery: Margaret Cho's revoicings of Mock Asian." *Pragmatics* 14(2/3): 263-289.

**Week 9      Spring Break**

**UNIT 3: APPLICATION IN SEXUAL DIVERSITY STUDIES**

**Week 10      Troubling Sex/Gender**

**3/17 & 19**

**T      Short Essay Question(s) on Unit 2 Due**

· Nestle, Joan, Riki Wilchins, Clare Howell (Editors). 2002. *GenderQueer: Voices From Beyond the Sexual Binary*. Los Angeles, CA: Alyson Publications. – (1) “20 Passings,” (2) “On the Dotted Line,” (3) “Freaks,” and (4) “Safe Trip”

**Th** · Roen, Katrina. 2001. "Transgender Theory and Embodiment: The Risk of Racial Marginalisation." *Journal of Gender Studies* 10(3):253-265.

Optional:

· Taylor, Verta and Leila J. Rupp. 2004. “Chicks with Dicks, Men in Dresses: What It Means to Be a Drag Queen.” *Journal of Homosexuality* 46(3-4):113-133.

**Week 11**

**3/24 & 26**

**Intersecting Identities – Sexuality, (Dis)Ability, and Class**

**T** · Sandahl, Carrie. 2003. “Queering the Crip or Crippling the Queer?: Intersections of Queer and Crip Identities in Solo Autobiographical Performance.” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 9(1/2):25-56.  
· Short video by Greg Walloch (in-class) - Walloch, Greg. Short video clip retrieved from <http://www.gregwalloch.com/>.

**Th** · Champagne, John. 2005. “Acting Like a Man.” *Harrington Gay Men’s Fiction Quarterly* 7(1): 99-114.

Optional:

· Clare, Eli. 2003. “Gawking, Gaping, Staring.” *GLQ* 9(1-2):257-261.

· Valocchi, Steve. (1999). "The Class-Inflected Nature of Gay Identity." *Social Problems* 46(2): 207-224.

**Week 12**

**3/31 & 4/2**

**Intersecting Identities – Race, Gender, Class, Sexuality**

**T** · Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. 1999. "The Social Construction and Institutionalization of Gender and Race." Pp. 3-43 in *Revisioning Gender*, edited by Myra M. Ferree, Judith Lorber, and Beth B. Hess. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

**Th** · No class, work on final projects. I will be at the MSS Conference.

Optional:

· Ford, Richard Thompson. 2007. "What’s Queer about Race?" *South Atlantic Quarterly* 106(3): 477-484.

**Week 13**

**4/7 & 9**

**Sexual Diversity**

**T** · Gopinath, Gayatri. 2005. “Bollywood Spectacles: Queer Diasporic Critique in the Aftermath of 9/11.” *Social Text* 23:157-169.  
· Short video on Bollywood (in-class)

- Th** · Edelman, Lee. 2007. "Ever After: History, Negativity, and the Social." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 106(3): 469-476.  
 · Cobb, Michael. 2007. "Lonely." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 106(3): 445-457.

**Week 14 Queering Normative Concepts and Structures – Femininity, Masculinity, and Whiteness**

- 4/14 & 16 **T** · Discussion of film: "Saving Face" - Wu, Alice. 2004. *Saving Face*. Destination Films.  
**Th** · Pascoe, CJ. 2005. "'Dude, You're a Fag': Adolescent Masculinity and the Fag Discourse." *Sexualities* 8(3): 329-346.

**Week 15 Queering Normative Concepts and Structures – Western Perceptions**

- 4/21 & 23 **T** · Haubegger, Christy. 2003. "I'm Not Fat, I'm Latina." Ch. 23 in *Reconstructing Gender: a Multicultural Anthology* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, edited by Estelle Disch. NY: McGraw Hill.  
**Th** · Presentation/Discussion of Final Projects

- Week 16 T** · Richter-Montpetit, Melanie. 2007. "A Queer Transnational Feminist Reading of the Prisoner 'Abuse' in Abu Ghraib and the Question of 'Gender Equality.'" *International feminist Journal of Politics* 9(1): 38-59.

- 4/28 & 30 **Th** · Wrap-Up and Course Evaluations

**Finals Week – Final Project Due**