

# Introduction to Queer Studies (GWS 203)

Fall 2014  
Cummings 308  
Mondays/Wednesdays 10:25am-11:50am

**Professor:** Ariella Rotramel, PhD

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**Office Location:** Room 2, Department of Gender and Women's Studies, 740 Williams Street.

**Office Hours:** Mondays 1:30-3:00pm and by appointment.

## **Course Overview**

This course provides multiple entries into sexuality, queer and gender studies. As we study the development of the fields of queer studies and LGBTQ history, we examine experiences of sexuality and gender across practices and identities. By utilizing varied resources, we explore the development of queer studies that encompasses critical analyses of power dynamics and the construction of sexual and gender categories. We study a range of approaches to uncovering and representing the experiences of people who deviate from sexual and gender norms. These tactics are considered within the broader context of normative gender and sexual social orders. A key component of the course is considering the intertwining of sexuality and gender identities with other categories such as race, class, and nation. With this intersectional approach, we gain a more robust understanding of the varying experiences and understandings of sexuality and gender.

## **Learning Goals**

This course fulfills Gender and Women's Studies departmental learning goal components. During the semester, you will:

- Become familiar with the historical formations of gender, sexuality and related social movements;
- Understand how forces of social identities and power intersect;
- Grasp the limitations of binary approaches to thinking about and "doing" gender;
- Appreciate the power of individual and collective agency;
- Use information literacy, research skills, and digital technologies to advance your learning.

## **Course Texts**

Gloria Anzaldúa. *Borderlands/La Frontera* (4<sup>th</sup> edition, 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary). San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2012. ISBN: 1879960850.

Cristy C. Road. *Spit and Passion*. New York: Feminist Press, 2012. ISBN: 978-1558618077.

Leila Rupp. *A Desired Past: A Short History of Same-Sex Love in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002. ISBN 0226731561.

*Course books are available at our campus bookstore for sale and are on reserve at our library for your use. Confirm the ISBN before ordering elsewhere to ensure you have the correct edition.* All other sources for our course are available via our course Moodle site and are marked with an asterisk in the course schedule.

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## **Universal Learning**

I am committed to the principle of universal learning. All of us learn in different ways and our course can be organized to accommodate all students. For example, you may learn more effectively through oral, written, or visual renderings of course topics. Our classroom, virtual spaces, learning and communication practices should be as inclusive as possible. **Please meet with me as soon as possible to discuss your individual learning needs and how they can be accommodated in this course.** If you do not have a documented disability, please remember that other support services, including the Academic Resource Center, Writing Center, and Counseling Services are available to all students and offer a range of services that are helpful for everyone.

## **Office of Student Accessibility Services**

If you have a physical, mental or learning disability, either hidden or visible, which may require classroom, test taking, or other reasonable modifications, please see me as soon as possible. If you have not already done so, please be sure to register with the Office of Student Accessibility Services. You can do so by going to the Office of Student Accessibility Services, which is located in Crozier Williams, Room 221, or by contacting the Office at 860-439-5240 or 860-439-5428, or by e-mail to [barbara.mcclarky@conncoll.edu](mailto:barbara.mcclarky@conncoll.edu) or [lillian.liebenthal@conncoll.edu](mailto:lillian.liebenthal@conncoll.edu).

## **Library Research Liaison**

Our research and instruction librarian is Ashley Hanson, MLIS. She welcomes your research questions and is available to meet one-on-one to assist you with your developing projects. Ashley can be reached via e-mail at [ashley.hanson@conncoll.edu](mailto:ashley.hanson@conncoll.edu) and her campus phone is x2653.

## **Academic Resource Center (ARC)**

The Academic Resource Center (ARC) offers services to support your academic work such as study skills workshops, time management, coaching and tutoring. Our offices are located in Main Street West, The Plex. Please visit us or call 860-439-5294 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

## **Roth Writing Center**

The Roth Writing Center provides one-to-one peer tutoring (free of charge) to help student writers of all abilities during all stages of the writing process. To make an appointment, call 860-439-2173 or stop by the Writing Center at 214 Blaustein. If you're a confident, experienced writer we can help you to push your ideas and polish your style; if you're a relatively inexperienced and not-so-confident writer we can also help you, by working on grammar or organization or whatever you need. Writing Center tutors are trained to help you to discover what you think through writing. Working with a tutor gives you the opportunity to share your work-in-progress with an actual reader, so that you can get useful feedback on that work *before* you have to turn it in for a final grade. For further information, visit the Writing Center web page at <http://write.conncoll.edu/>.

## **Connecticut College Honor Code**

Academic integrity is of the utmost importance in maintaining the high standards of scholarship in our community. Academic dishonesty is considered to be a serious offense against the community and represents a significant breach of trust between the professor, the classmates, and the student. There are many forms of academic dishonesty including plagiarism, submitting the same work in two courses without prior approval, unauthorized discussion or distribution of exams or assignments, and offering or receiving unauthorized aid on exams or graded assignments. Students violating the Honor Code may be referred to the college's Honor Council for resolution. It is your responsibility to ask for assistance if you need clarification or support with any academic concerns, such as how to properly cite sources or prepare for course assignments.

## **Title IX Confidentiality/Mandated Reporter Statement**

As a faculty member, I am deeply invested in the well being of each student I teach. I am here to assist you with your work in this course. If you come to me with other non-course-related concerns, I will do my best to help. It is important for you to know that all faculty members are mandated reporters of any incidents of sexual misconduct. That means that I cannot keep information about sexual misconduct confidential if you share that information with me. Darcie Folsom, the Director of Sexual Violence Prevention and Advocacy, can advise you confidentially as can Counseling Services and any of the College chaplains. Darcie can also help you access other resources on campus and in the local community. You can reach Darcie at x2219 or [darcie.folsom@conncoll.edu](mailto:darcie.folsom@conncoll.edu), and her office is in Cro 222. The student sexual misconduct policy is in the Student Handbook, which can be found on Camelweb, in the "Documents/Policies" section, under the Student Life section. There you will find the policies, definitions, procedures and resources.

## **Student Health Services**

Student Health Services, located in the Warnshuis Student Health Center behind the library, is available to all full-time, matriculated students. Our purpose is to help students maintain optimal general health through the

disciplines of physical and mental health, and health education around lifestyle choices. This is accomplished through a full-time staff and a variety of professional consultants in many disciplines. All professional services are delivered with attention to confidentiality. In the event of a serious illness or injury, parents or guardian will be notified at the discretion of the staff. You can schedule an appointment Monday through Friday by calling 860-439-2275. Information on Care When We Are Closed, Our Services, and Student Health Insurance may be found on Camelweb, in the Student Life Section, under Student Health Services.

### **Student Counseling Services**

The mission of the Student Counseling Services is to promote the emotional and psychological growth and well being of the students at Connecticut College. The Student Counseling Services' goal is to enhance each individual's ability to learn, to create and to be fully participating members of the College community by utilizing safe, culturally sensitive and inclusive approaches to mental health treatment. To carry out this mission, Student Counseling Services makes available to students a wide range of outpatient clinical services in a safe, non-judgmental atmosphere including:

- Evaluation
- Individual and group counseling
- Psychopharmacological evaluation and medication management
- Crisis intervention services
- Outreach and consultation to the College community
- Psycho-educational forums
- Referral to off-campus clinicians for specialized and/or intensive treatment

Connecticut College Student Counseling Services has been accredited by the International Accreditation of Counseling Services (IACS) since 2005. Appointments may be made by phone at (860) 439-4587 or via email at SCS@conncoll.edu.

### **Office Hours**

I hold office hours in order to provide you with an opportunity to discuss course-specific issues that we have not been able to address in class. Examples of reasons that you may visit my office hours include: discussing a course topic further; questions or concerns about your work in this course; or a personal issue is affecting your work and we need to find a strategy to address this challenge. Do not hesitate to meet with me as soon as possible if you are having difficulties with the course because there is little we can do at the end of the semester.

### **Grading and Course Assignments**

You will receive your final grade based on your performance in class and course work. The grading scale for this course is: A = 100-93; A- = 92-90; B+ = 89-87; B = 86-83; B- = 82-80; C+ = 79-77; C = 76-73; C- = 72-70; D = 69-60; F = 59 and below. Late assignments receive a deduction of one letter grade per 24-hour late period. Assignment extensions may be requested with timely notification. This course does not have extra credit work.

	<b>Participation</b>	<b>Q Intersections Paper</b>	<b>Q Meanings Proposal</b>	<b>Q Meanings Report</b>	<b>Q Meanings Presentations</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>
Due	Ongoing	Oct. 13	Oct. 27	Dec. 8	Dec. 3 & 8	Finals
% of Grade	20	20	10	15	15	20

*Guidelines and grading rubrics for course assignments are shared and discussed in class during the semester.*

### **Participation**

Course participation in this course includes engagement in and outside of the classroom including class discussions, group work, and online communication. Consistent, critically engaged participation is crucial for a successful and productive course. Class discussions are in relationship with the course readings and themes, and you must come to class having completed all assigned reading. During our class, I often ask questions to the group as a whole or in small group settings that are intended to facilitate our discussion and your learning. Rather than your participation being based on always having the “right” answer, our class is a space for active learning where we are trying out ideas together. In other words, I am not quizzing you when I ask questions or encourage you to respond to each other. Instead, I am seeking to establish a common base of knowledge and

help you further deepen your understanding of course topics through dialogue.

You are required to come to class on time. Lateness and unexcused absences count negatively towards your grade. 4 or more unexcused absences will result in a failing course grade. Attendance is mandatory on presentation days and for required outside class events. You may provide proper documentation and/or have your class dean contact me for unavoidable absences in order to avoid a negative impact on your final grade.

As a member of this course, you respectfully engage all members of the classroom and talk only in your turn. Interruptions and hostile remarks will not be tolerated. Use of electronics in class is solely for work related to our course. Usage of your laptop or tablet for work in other classes or entertainment may result in laptop use being disallowed for the rest of the semester and is negatively reflected in your participation grade.

**Each day of class you submit via our online form two discussion questions and one comment regarding the day's readings by 9:00am.** These questions are used to assess your participation and drawn upon in our class sessions. Late submissions are not accepted for this course component as it is time-sensitive.

### **Queer Intersections Paper**

Queer as a category of analysis, as a cultural practice, as a politics, and as an identity, is always entwined with other categories such as race, gender, class and nation. For this assignment, you choose a queer media item to analyze intersectionally – highlighting the significance and meetings of sexuality with other categories. Your study culminates in a five-page research paper that draws upon a minimum of five outside academic sources.

### **Queer Meanings Project**

“Queer” is used in many contexts with varying meanings. In this project, you work in a small group to investigate what “queer” means to you, our community (as you choose to define it), and the different forms it has taken in course readings. Together, you develop a proposal that includes background research and explains your approach to the topic. Your work results in a ten-page group report, twenty-minute group presentation, and individual short peer and self-evaluation.

### **Final Exam**

Our final exam covers all course content from the first day of class to the exam day. The exam is open book and note. The exam includes definition, short answer and an essay questions reflecting on your queer meanings project.

### **Course Schedule**

#### **Wednesday, September 3                      Introduction**

- \*Lorde, “The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action.”
- \*Pew Research, “A Survey of LGBT Americans.”

#### **Monday, September 8                      Developing a Queer Analysis**

- \*Butler, “Critically Queer.”

#### **Wednesday, September 10                      Critiquing Heteronormativity**

- \*Sedgwick, “How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay.”

#### **Monday, September 15                      Sex, Power and Politics**

- \*Cohen, “Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential...”
- \*Hollibaugh and Moraga, “What We’re Rollin’ Around in Bed With.”

#### **Wednesday, September 17                      Creating Identities and Communities**

- \*D’Emilio, “Capitalism and Gay Identity.”
- \*Chun and Singh, “The Bisexual Youth of Color Intersecting Identities Development Model.”

#### **Monday, September 22                      Foucauldian Approaches to Sexuality**

- \*Selections from Foucault, *History of Sexuality Vol. I.*
- \*Luibhéid, “Power and Sexuality at the Border”

<b>Wednesday, September 24</b>	<b>Negotiating Queer Identities</b>
➤ <u>Queer Intersections Topic Shared with Class via Google Drive</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Bérubé, "How Gay Stays White and What Kind of White It Stays."	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Anzaldúa, "To(o) Queer the Writer."	
<b>Monday, September 29</b>	<b>No Class – Fall Break</b>
<b>Wednesday, October 1</b>	<b>Politics of Queer Studies</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> *Rubin, "Thinking Sex."	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Erickson-Schroth and Mitchell, "Queering Queer Theory, or Why Bisexuality Matters."	
<b>Monday, October 6</b>	<b>Compulsory Heterosexuality and Ability</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> *Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality..."	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Kafer, "Compulsory Bodies: Reflections on Heterosexuality and Able-bodiedness."	
<b>Wednesday, October 8</b>	<b>Beyond the Mind/Body Dichotomy</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> *Hale, "Leatherdyke Boys and Their Daddies: How to Have Sex Without..."	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Bettcher, "Trapped in the Wrong Theory: Rethinking Trans Oppression and Resistance."	
<b>Monday, October 13</b>	<b>Questioning Queer as Anti-Normative</b>
➤ <u>Queer Intersections Paper Due</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Shotwell, "Open Normativities: Gender, Disability, and Collective Political Change."	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Eltman, "Couple Fights For Right To Live Together At Group Home."	
<b>Wednesday, October 15</b>	<b>Approaching Histories of Sexuality</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Rupp, "Introduction: Thinking about Aunt Leila."	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Bennett, "'Lesbian-Like' and the Social History of Lesbianisms."	
<b>Monday, October 20</b>	<b>Making American Gender and Sexual Culture</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Rupp, "In the Beginning" and "Worlds of Men, Worlds of Women."	
<b>Wednesday, October 22</b>	<b>Science and the Construction of Sexual Categories</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Rupp, "Definitions and Deviance: Sexual Transformations at the Turn of the Century."	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Somerville, "Scientific Racism and the Emergence of the Homosexual Body."	
<b>Monday, October 27</b>	<b>Finding Community and Facing Oppression</b>
➤ <u>Queer Meanings Project Proposal Due</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Rupp, "Coming Together" and "Becoming a People."	
<b>Wednesday, October 29</b>	<b>Respectability and Reclaiming Transgender History</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Rupp, "Conclusion: Something Old, Something New."	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Stryker, "Transgender History, Homonormativity, and Disciplinarity."	
<b>Monday, November 3</b>	<b>ARC Presentation Workshop and Queer Meaning Project Work Day</b>
<b>Wednesday, November 5</b>	<b>Embracing/Struggling with Family</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> *Johnson, "'Quare' Studies, Or (Almost) Everything I Know About Queer Studies..."	
<input type="checkbox"/> Road, <i>Spit and Passion</i> , 1-42.	
<b>Monday, November 10</b>	<b>Queerly Punk</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Road, <i>Spit and Passion</i> , 43-90.	
<b>Wednesday, November 12</b>	<b>Queering Campus</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Readings to be announced.	
<b>Monday, November 17</b>	<b>From Contradictions to Self-Determination</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Road, <i>Spit and Passion</i> , 91-158.	
<input type="checkbox"/> *Rodríguez, "Being and Belonging: Joey Terrill's Performance of Politics."	

- Wednesday, November 19**                   **Creating a Legacy**  
 Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 1-17 and 267-284.
- Monday, November 24**                   **Weaving History, Identity and Practice**  
 Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 18-86.
- Monday, December 1**                   **Poetry Is Not a Luxury**  
 Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 87-225.
- Wednesday, December 3**                   **Queer Meanings Presentation**
- Monday, December 8**                   **Queer Meanings Presentation and Reports Due**
- Wednesday, December 10**                   **Doing Queer Studies**  
 \*Fotopoulou, “Intersectionality, Queer Studies and Hybridity...”  
 \*Excerpts from Halberstam, *Female Masculinities*.