Queer Studies
The University of Texas at San Antonio

ENG 4953.001    WS 4953.002
Fall 2012

Instructor:    Michael Lee Gardin
Class Times:   MWF 3:00 - 3:50 PM
Classroom:     MB 1.102
Office:        MB 2.306E
Office Hours:  Wednesday 1:00 - 2:00 PM and by appointment
Office Telephone:  210-458-7884 *The best method of contact is email.
Email:         Michael.gardin@utsa.edu

Required Texts


The other readings will be posted on Blackboard. You are responsible for locating, downloading, and reading them, as well as printing them and bringing them to class.

Course Description
This course introduces students to the subjects, histories, concerns, and debates of Queer Studies and LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) Studies. The course is interdisciplinary, and students will explore writing, such as theory and scholarship, but also art and culture. The guiding effort will be encouraging students to recognize, critique, and use the tools and ruptures queer provides to challenge, destabilize, and theorize their previous knowledge and the world around them, especially concerning normative and/or pervasive conceptualizations and representations of gender and sexuality. In this course, students will examine queer identity through intersections of race, class, and gender.

Other Materials Needed for the Course
1. You will need access to your MyUTSA email account and Blackboard. We will be using Blackboard to access readings and to interact with one another. In addition, if I need to contact you, I will do so through your UTSA email account. Therefore, you must have access to both. If you have issues, please do not hesitate to contact proper technical support. If your internet is not working at home, I expect you to campus. Classroom technology is an asset and tool for us, but please be responsible – we do not want technical difficulties to interfere with your success.

2. You will need a scantron (#882-E) for the final exam.
Attendance and Participation
Because we will be working on with new concepts each class period and since participation in the course is mandatory, it is very important that you attend class. More than 3 absences will result in a lowering of your grade. Your grade will be lowered one letter for each class you miss after the first three absences. I strongly discourage you miss class at all. Should you have an emergency which requires that you be absent, it is extremely important that you contact me—preferably before class. The only types of absences that do not count towards the 3 absences are university business. These must be discussed with me before the date and require official written documentation of the event/date/etc.

On the rare occasion, if you are going to be absent from class and would like to be informed of what you will be missing, please let me know by email at least 24 hours in advance, or you may always come by my office hours (please do not attempt to ask for a class recap before, after, or during a following class meeting). Also, remember that all assignments and due dates are on the calendar and you are the person solely responsible for your work. Your success requires commitment and attendance, and you cannot make up for absences. Again, remember that any class missed beyond the allowed 3 will result in a drop of a letter grade on your final grade.

Good Communication – As your instructor, it is my job to help you succeed. Therefore, you may have questions or concerns throughout the semester, and when you do, please come by my office during office hours or schedule a meeting with me. The best method of contact for me is email, and I will respond within 24 hours.

Late Assignments:
As a rule, late assignments are not permitted. Late assignments turned into your instructor will be counted as a zero. For an assignment to not be late, it must be turned into me at the beginning of class the day it is due (another reason to avoid tardiness) or posted in the correct Blackboard location by the time specified. If some kind of emergency occurs please contact me before class, and we will arrange a time to turn in your work early. Assignments will not be accepted through email.

Classroom Expectations
The Instructor and students are expected to be respectful of each others’ opinions and cultures. Students will be expected to be in class ready to participate when class starts. Tardiness is strongly discouraged and will count against both attendance and quiz grades.

Students are required to maintain and promote an appropriate classroom behavior. The following is from the Provost’s statement on “Civility in the Classroom”:

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. To assure all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class, students are prohibited from engaging in any form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a request to leave class.

Some examples of unacceptable behavior are: ringing of cell phones or beepers, inappropriate challenges to the professor’s authority, excessive tardiness or leaving class early, making offensive remarks, missing deadlines, prolonged chatting, reading newspapers during class, sleeping, talking out of turn, dominating discussion, shuffling backpacks and notebooks, and overt inattentiveness.
Silence and stow away phones, mp3 players, laptops, and other electronic devices during class. I have zero tolerance for phone use during class time. If you use headphones, sleep, or text during class, you will be counted absent and/or be asked to leave class. Again, do not text message, check your facebook/myspace/twitter/blog sites, etc. or do any other socializing or outside class work on your computer during class time. If you do so I will give you one warning, after that I will ask you to leave the class, you will be counted absent, and I will deduct half a letter grade from your final grade. I do not want to see phones out during class! And if you choose to use your laptop, I caution you to only do so if you feel you are self-disciplined enough to use it only for note taking.

Students must arrive in class on time and ready to learn.

I am dedicated to your learning, but you must be dedicated as well. Work and write from within your perspective and passion, but also look outside of it. Come to class, think critically, complete the assignments, participate in class discussions and group work, respect your peers and their ideas and you will succeed academically. Discriminatory behavior based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, politics, etc. will not be tolerated in the least bit. This class will challenge your thinking, and you must be prepared to encounter and engage new and differing views and handle challenges productively. Please know I am committed to your success and hope this class helps you become a stronger thinker, writer, reader, and academic.

Scholastic Dishonesty
The University expects every student to maintain a high standard of individual integrity for work done. Scholastic dishonesty is a serious offense which includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test or other class work, plagiarism (the appropriation of another’s work and the unauthorized incorporation of that work in one’s own work), and collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing college work offered for credit). In cases of scholastic dishonesty, the faculty member responsible for this class may initiate disciplinary proceedings against the student. Plagiarism carries severe consequences. These include, but are not limited to, receiving an F (0) for the assignment and documentation of the incident is forwarded to Student Judicial Affairs.

Students with Disabilities
Support services, including registration assistance and equipment, are available to students with documented disabilities through the Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS), MS 2.03.19. Students are encouraged to contact that office at 458-4157 prior to starting classes to make arrangements, though they can contact the office at any time.

Grade Scale

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<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<td>97 - 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>93 - 96%</td>
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<td>90 - 92%</td>
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<td>80 - 82%</td>
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<td>77 - 79%</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>73 - 76%</td>
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<td>70 - 72%</td>
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<td>67 - 69%</td>
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<td>0-59 points</td>
<td>F</td>
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Responsibility and Integrity for your work: Please do not blame your computer or printer for late, missing, or unsatisfactory work. Please save and back up every file, and do not wait until the last minute to print your assignment. The campus has a number of computer labs available for your use. After any assignment is returned, I will be happy to discuss it with you during my office hours, after 24 hours have elapsed from the time it was returned. This delay allows you to review my comments and reflect on the assignment requirements.

Please remember I cannot report grades through email, phone, or fax.
**Assessment** | **%** | **Due Date**
--- | --- | ---
Quizzes | 25% | Weekly
Discussion Group Postings, Participation, and Facilitation | 20% | See schedule
Presentation | 5% | On your assigned date
Annotated Bibliography | 5% | Beginning of class Oct. 17
Research Essay | 25% | Beginning of class Nov. 28
Final Exam | 20% | Thursday, Dec. 13 1:30-4:00 pm

**Reading Assignments:** Reading assignments are to be read and carefully studied for each class discussion and for assignments.

**Quizzes:** There will be a quiz each week, or sometimes, each class administered during class at the start of class. There will be a time limit for taking in-class quizzes, so if you arrive to class late, you have less time to take the quiz. If you are absent the day a reading is assigned, you are still responsible for the material covered on the quiz. If you are absent for the quiz, you will automatically receive a zero for the quiz. You will not be able to make up any missed quizzes.

**Group Discussion Blackboard Postings:**
**Due:** Sep. 16, Sep. 18, Sep. 23 Sep. 25, Nov. 4, Nov. 6, Nov. 11, Nov. 13 at 11:59 pm

Four weeks of the semester, students will submit Blackboard posts focused readings or opinions, topics, or polemics brought up in the course. Prompts will be posted in Discussion section on Blackboard. All students will have varied and unique responses, and each student’s perspectives and thoughts will help us work toward deeper thinking of the material explored in the class. Then, students will also submit responses to the posting of other peers in their discussion group. These will be reflective in nature, and should be focused on 1) what questions the peer’s post elucidated, 2) what new information the student learned from the peer’s post, and 3) how their perspective on the topic at hand differed. All Blackboard posts should be at least 150 and no more than 200 words. Each post can earn up to 20 points. The assessment of these posts will be determined by the qualities that follow, which are reflected on the rubrics used for the assigning of points.

1. Answers the question or prompt in a thorough manner, with details, reasons, and/or explanation.
2. Shows evidence of deeper thinking by questioning, analyzing, evaluating, or drawing conclusions
3. Prepared in a manner that is easy to read. With strong excellent sentence structure and word choice, and very few errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation.
4. Demonstrates tone appropriate for productive academic discussion.

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<tr>
<th>Rubric Section</th>
<th>Failure (0 Points Earned)</th>
<th>Very Poor (1 Point Earned)</th>
<th>Poor (2 Points Earned)</th>
<th>Fair (3 Points Earned)</th>
<th>Good (4 Points Earned)</th>
<th>Excellent (5 Points Earned)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Addresses Prompt/ Peer Post</td>
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<td>Shows Deeper Thinking</td>
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<td>Clarity of Writing</td>
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<td>Tone of Writing</td>
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Discussion Group Meetings Description and Assessment:
Discussion Group Meeting Days: Sep. 21, Sep. 28, Nov. 9, Nov. 16

On four Fridays throughout the course, students will meet with a group of peers. These class periods will be devoted to discussing and exploring the course material, specifically the readings, concepts, topics, opinions, controversies, or polemics from the Blackboard postings. During the discussion group meetings, a student will be assigned the role of facilitator, which will rotate throughout the course so that all students will facilitate and participate. The facilitator that week is responsible for preparing a plan for the day. The goal is to cover and build on the discussion posted on Blackboard. All students in the group contributing to the conversation during class meeting is also the goal.

Assessment will be determined by the students with instructor guidance at the beginning of the semester. The class as a whole will determine the most vital aspects of discussion that must be present on the day for the discussion to be successful and then how to evaluate this and assign points. The class as a whole will determine this assessment for both the roles of participator and facilitators. Overall, group discussion posting, participation, and facilitation will be 20% of student’s grade.

Presentation:
Students will present on their selected date.

Each of you will present one on the assigned secondary readings (the ones posted on Blackboard) in the class. I will pass around a sign-up sheet on the second week of class, and you will sign up for one of the readings. If you what you would like to present on before that, email me with your request. The first student to request a particular reading will be signed up.

In class, you will conduct a 5-7 minute presentation on your reading. Please be sure to make the best use of your time and do not go over or under. In your presentation avoid summarizing. Everyone has read the material, so please do not summarize. Instead, you will want to choose from one of the following:
- Defining a key concept or term presented in the reading and telling why it is significant
- How does the reading reflect to today’s realities by using specific concrete examples from current events, art, culture, media, etc.

When preparing for this presentation, it might be helpful to think to yourself, “why should we care and pay attention to the ideas put forth by this writing?” because that is what I am looking for in each short presentation.

Finally, you are required to create a handout and make copies for everyone in class as well as upload it to Blackboard the day you present. Your handout is a summary. This will be like a study guide for you and your peers. You want to highlight the key ideas of your reading. You may want to do this in an outline, a chart, a list, etc. whichever format you feel portrays the main ideas most effectively and clearly. At the end of the semester, you will have a collection of handouts that will help you retain the knowledge you gained from the readings throughout the semester.

Annotated Bibliography:
Due: Wednesday, October 17

In preparation for writing your essay, you will research academic resources that will help you build your argument. You will need to include 8 sources within your annotated bibliography, while your
essay requires only 6. Every source need to be academic and appropriate to the field. We will discuss the details of the annotations, format, and assessment in class.

**Research Essay:**
Due: Wednesday, November, 28

Following the annotated bibliography, you will be required to write an 8-10 page essay. This essay needs to be well focused while making a significant point or argument. It should also function as a contribution to the field of Queer Studies; in other words, do not simply summarize another argument or set of points made in any other readings. Synthesize your sources as your shape a unique argument. Your topic, focus, and argument will be decided by you. We will discuss this project in more detail and you will be given a list of more particular requirements.

**Final Exam:**
Thursday, Dec. 13 at 1:30-4:00 pm

The final exam will be given during the finals week in our regular classroom. The final will be comprehensive, so save your notes and handouts throughout the semester. On the day of the final you will need to bring a pencil and a scantron (#882-E).

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<tr>
<th>UTSA Creed and Honor Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Roadrunner Creed</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The University of Texas at San Antonio is a community of scholars, where integrity, excellence, inclusiveness, respect, collaboration, and innovation are fostered. As a Roadrunner, I will:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Uphold the highest standards of academic and personal integrity by practicing and expecting fair and ethical conduct</td>
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<td>• Respect and accept individual differences, recognizing the inherent dignity of each person;</td>
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<td>• Contribute to campus life and the larger community through my active engagement; and</td>
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<td>• Support the fearless exploration of dreams and ideas in the advancement of ingenuity, creativity, and discovery.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Honor Code</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The University of Texas at San Antonio community shares the responsibility and commitment to integrity and the ethical pursuit of knowledge and adheres to the UTSA Honor Code.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.utsa.edu/about/honorcode">www.utsa.edu/about/honorcode</a></td>
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