

**XIDS 2100 Introduction to Gender and Sexuality Studies, Spring 2016****Class Schedule:** MW 11:00-12:20 Pafford 306**Professor:** Dr. Laura Miller **Contact Information:** lmiller@westga.edu; 678-839-4891 (office land line)**Office Location:** TLC 2238; **Office Hours:** MW 8:45-10:45; MW 12:30-1:45, F 8:45-10:00; and by appointment**Note.** all email communication between the student and instructor **must be** conducted via your my.westga.edu account.

**Statement on Course Content.** As the title of this course suggests, we will examine texts containing content for a mature audience. It is a course on gender and sexuality, so some of the works will be sexually explicit. Enter at your own risk. If you are unsure whether this class will be for you, please look through the books we will be reading and read reviews of them to familiarize yourself with their content before the drop deadline. Our task is to analyze the texts from an academic perspective using theories and techniques developed primarily within the humanities. While it will often be appropriate to criticize texts and ideas, it is essential that we do so in a professional, academic way, showing the utmost respect for others.

**Trigger Warnings.** It is impossible for me to control or predict what will trigger a student. If you are triggered by something, feel free to step out of class (if it happens there), contact me, or visit office hours.

**Our mental health and our community:** If you are having thoughts of harming yourself or another, please seek help. You are worth so much more than you know. Recovering from adversity is hard work, but worth it, because you are worth it. There are free campus resources to help you. The number for our counseling center (with free counseling) is 678-839-6428. The national suicide prevention lifeline is 1(800) 273-8255. Call them. And please: if you see something, say something. For example, reach out to your roommate if he/she has seemed unhappy and withdrawn lately. If you want someone to get help who seems unwilling to do so, visit <http://www.westga.edu/uwgcares/> and use the link provided to contact the university anonymously. We are living in a violent time and there are many things we cannot control. We can all do our part to create a college climate of friendliness and compassion.

**Course Description.** To study gender and sexuality is to study issues that affect all people, whether one faces the pressure to conform to a particular definition of masculinity or femininity, or confronts the definition of certain kinds of sexuality as normative. This class will explore topics related to gender and sexuality through the viewing of films and the reading of critical texts, fictional works, and autobiographical essays. We will explore queer cinema made during a period of censorship, representations of bisexuality, race and gender, sadomasochism in literature, and transgender identities. The works we will encounter in this class have been chosen for several reasons: because they are engagingly written and provocative, because they are culturally significant (*Fifty Shades of Grey*), and because they will help you write about topics related to gender and sexuality in future classes. I hope that this class leaves you with a sense of the diverse ways gender and sexuality can be approached and analyzed.

**Learning Outcomes.** Students will...

...identify and describe how gendered and sexual codes are utilized in cultural texts.

...demonstrate the ability to use critical thinking skills to interrogate cultural assumptions regarding gender and sexuality.

...describe and evaluate, orally and in writing, the role of cultural differences on portrayals of gender in textual and visual media.

...describe and evaluate, orally and in writing, contemporary attitudes and representations of gender and sexuality in a broader historical context.

...demonstrate an awareness of prevailing theories used to analyze gender and sexuality in the humanities.

...analyze and evaluate, orally and in writing, gendered and sexual codes through a diverse set of lenses, including race, class, sexual orientation, and ethnicity.

This is a Required class for the minor in gender and sexuality studies and fits requirements for Core Area C

**Books you will buy:**

E.L. James	<i>Fifty Shades of Grey</i>
James Baldwin	<i>Giovanni's Room</i>
Kate Bornstein and S. Bear Bergman	<i>Gender Outlaws: The Next Generation</i>
Ed. Mary Evans and Carolyn Williams	<i>Gender: The Key Concepts</i>
Alison Bechdel	<i>Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic</i>

Ecopies are fine. Yes, you need to read the book even if you've seen the film.

**Evaluation/Grades and Percentages:**

- Course Participation (attendance, group workshops, daily work, in-class writing) 15%
- Mini-papers 10% each, 40% total

- Gender Memoir 20%
- Final Exam 25%

**Grade percentages: A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F = 0-59.**

#### Assignment Details:

**Requirements:** There will be five two-page mini-papers, a gender memoir, and a final exam.

1. **Mini-paper #1** should focus on either *Rope* or *The Celluloid Closet*
2. **Mini-paper #2** should focus on either *Giovanni's Room* or *Key Concepts*
3. **Mini-paper #3** should focus on *Gender Outlaws* or *Fun Home*
4. **Mini-paper #4** should focus on *Key Concepts* or *Fifty Shades of Grey*

Note: Key Concepts is mentioned twice; you can write about it as much as you'd like, but you should choose a different concept each time.

5. **Final gender memoir:** This is a 5-7 page personal essay on the role gender has played in your life. Regardless of whether you identify as LGBTQIA or heterosexual, each of us has had interesting and formative experiences related to gender that this essay gives you the opportunity to explore. Feel free to use the essay types from *Gender Outlaws* as a model. This kind of essay tends to be easier to write than a usual 5-7 page paper, in case you are worried.
6. **Final exam** will cover content on all texts in short answer questions. I'll give a study guide/handout in class.

Here are some possible ways to approach the **mini-paper:**

--provide a close analysis of a small segment of one our texts using theories and terms that we have discussed in class.

--compare and contrast episodes from two texts.

--discuss the relationship between gender/sexuality and race, class, culture, and/or historical moment in one of our primary texts.

--explain why you agree or disagree with an idea or text that we have been discussing in class. Is a particular theory or approach problematic? How? What are its advantages and disadvantages?

**University policies that apply to all courses may be found at the following link:**

[http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common\\_Language\\_for\\_Course\\_Syllabi.pdf](http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf) You must familiarize yourself with these policies. They concern plagiarism/the honor code, the Americans with Disabilities Act, our credit hour policy, and some information regarding workload expectations for college-level classes.

#### Student Responsibilities

Your main responsibilities are to come to class prepared, participate in discussions, turn in your assignments on time, and do as well as you can on the assignments. Assignments will be graded according to the English department's grading guidelines. Often students need to do at least two or three hours of work for each hour of class time. Try to budget your time accordingly, and please come see me in my office hours if you are struggling with the readings or workload.

**Late work** will be penalized 5 points for each day that it is late. Late includes everything following the last minute of class. So, a paper due on a Tuesday and turned in on a Thursday loses ten points. A paper due on a Tuesday and turned in an hour after class ends will lose 5 points.

#### Attendance

- You are required to attend and participate in each session of this class.
- You will have **three free absence days** for life events, illness, and emergencies. You can miss these two sessions for any reason at all. If you miss a class, you are still responsible for the work during that class, including online participation. If you miss only one class, but it is on an exam or presentation day, you will receive a zero for that assignment.
- **If you miss more than three classes**, your overall grade for the class will be reduced by one letter grade for each two additional class sessions missed. For example, if you earn a B in the class and you have missed four classes, your B will be reduced to a C. If you are having problems with attendance, please see or contact me.
- **If you are late or absent, get notes from another classmate.** Most of the important announcements happen during the first ten minutes of class. Excessive lateness will also result in a deduction from the overall course grade. Look at your schedule and make sure you have enough time to get to class.

**Our schedule (take a picture with your phone!)**

Anything mentioned on a day is DUE ON THAT DAY IN CLASS. **KC:** Key Concepts book

Note: if you see a work that we are talking about on multiple days, try to spread your reading out over those days. For example, it says *Giovanni's Room* 1, 2, and 3 on different classes. Read the first third of the book for the first class and pace yourself accordingly. Or read the whole thing. But you'll have to finish the book by the last day we cover it in class.

Week	Monday	Wednesday
1 <i>Intro</i>	1/11 Intro, overview	1/13 Key Concepts discussion KC: The Body Heteronormativity Gender Identity
2	1/18 MLK Holiday, no classes	1/20 Queer cinema: <i>The Celluloid Closet</i>
3	1/25 <i>The Celluloid Closet</i> discussion KC: Performativity, The Male Gaze	1/27 Dr. Miller is in NY at a symposium. No class meeting. Work on mini-papers. Treat yourself, etc.
4	2/1 <i>Rope</i> viewing KC: Men, Masculinity, Masculinities	2/3 <i>Rope</i> discussion, <b>mini-paper due</b>
5	2/8 Key Concepts discussion KC: Feminization of Poverty Feminist Economics Gender and Development Class	2/10 Key Concepts discussion: KC: Transnational Feminisms Intersectionality Cultural Difference Postcolonialism
6	2/15 <i>Giovanni's Room</i> 1	2/17 <i>Giovanni's Room</i> 2
7	2/22 <i>Giovanni's Room</i> 3 <b>mini-paper due</b>	2/24 Dr. Miller is at SEASECS. No class meeting. Work on mini-papers and catch up on reading.
8	2/29 <i>Fun Home</i> 1	3/2 <i>Fun Home</i> 2 (3/3 is withdrawal deadline!)
9	3/7 Key Concepts discussion KC: The Sexual Division of Labor Care Gender-Based Violence <b>mini-paper due</b>	3/9 <i>Gender Outlaws</i> 1
3/14-3/19 Spring Break, no classes		
10	3/21 <i>Gender Outlaws</i> 2	3/23 <i>Gender Outlaws</i> 3 <b>mini-paper due</b>
11	3/28 Key Concepts discussion KC: New Reproductive Technologies Cyberspace Disability	3/30 No class: Dr Miller is at ASECS.
12	4/4 <i>Lecture: Sodomasochism</i>	4/6 <i>50 Shades of Grey</i> 1
13	4/11 <i>50 Shades of Grey</i> 2	4/13 <i>50 Shades of Grey</i> 3 <b>mini-paper due</b>
14	4/18 Gender memoir discussion—bring drafts	4/20 Final exam review
15	Finals Week: Memoirs due. Final exam is Monday, Apr 25, 11:00-1:30 pm	