Course Title and Number: SW 462 Lesbian and Gay Lives

Instructor:

Location:

Days and Times:

Contact Information:

Office Hours:

Credits: 3

Prerequisites:

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Queer persons are found everywhere, among all categories of people according to: class, culture, gender, and age. They are labeled in a variety of ways, including “lesbian,” “gay,” “homosexual,” “bisexual,” “transgender,” and “queer.” Historically, persons so labeled have been mistreated by society, but nonetheless have made significant contributions. To explore queer lives, theoretical topics will be examined across academic disciplines. This approach allows students from a variety of majors to examine queer issues in their own and in other fields through the framework of a single course. Class participants are expected to develop new insights and knowledge, using current research and theory from a variety of academic perspectives, and to examine more critically their own views. In addition, through learning about the historical development of homophobia and heterosexism, the contributions of lesbian and gay people, and the development of queer communities, students will have the opportunity to understand and appreciate “difference” as another contribution to American society.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
1. Articulate barriers to learning about queer persons within select academic disciplines.
2. Identify contributions by queers within select academic disciplines.
3. Critique theoretical explanations of the origin and development of individual homosexuality and societal responses to it.
4. Critically examine psychological aspects of homosexuality.
5. Analyze the relationships between societal institutions and homosexuals.
6. Explain the historical role of prejudice against homosexuals and gain new insights on issues regarding homosexuality.
7. Trace the development of public policies regarding the persecution and protection of queer persons.
8. Reflect upon your own learning about queer people.

REQUIRED READINGS
You will be expected to have completed all assigned readings prior to the class session on which they are assigned. Assigned readings are listed in the Course Calendar. All readings can be found in either the textbook listed below or on electronic reserves.


- Reading Packet available through electronic reserves at the UNR library.

ASSIGNMENTS

Discussion Board
The Discussion board will simulate the discussion and question/answer format of classroom-based learning. All students are expected to participate in the class by posting questions and responses to the course Discussion board. To facilitate class discussions, I will provide discussion questions each week. However, students are also encouraged to raise questions regarding the week’s topic on the Discussion board. You may respond to either the instructor’s question or to questions/comments raised by your fellow students. You will receive two points per week for your participation. Although there is no limit to the number of postings you make per week, you are required to post at least twice per week. Postings should begin during week 1 and continue through the week of final exams. The instructor’s questions can be found in the Course Content and on the Discussion Board Questions List. Participation in the course Discussion board is worth 30 points total, or 20 percent of your course grade. To receive credit for participating, students must submit their questions and responses each week by Sunday evening (6 p.m. PST).

Weekly Assignments
Students will be asked to complete a short written assignment each week (excluding week 6 and the week of final exams). The purposes of these assignments are to encourage self-reflection; develop an empathetic understanding of the struggles confronting gay men, lesbians, and bisexual people; and to pursue issues related to sexual orientation within your own fields of study. Some assignments will ask you to reflect upon your own experiences, while other assignments will ask you to conduct additional investigation of the week’s topic. All of the assignments require that you integrate what you learn through the course readings and lecture.

Assignments are listed under the learning modules by week and are also available through the Webcampus Assignments Tool. You should submit completed assignments via the Assignments tool by 6:00 p.m Friday. (PST). Points will be deducted for late assignments. For further information, please refer to the Course
Policies. Each assignment is worth 5 points. These assignments are worth 40 percent of your grade.

Exams
There will be two short exams given during the semester, one at the semester midpoint and one at the end of the semester. Each exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and essay questions. Questions will be designed to elicit your ability to identify, apply, and critique knowledge derived from our course readings and class sessions. The dates for these exams are noted in the Course Calendar. The exams are worth 30 points each.

Students living in the Reno/Sparks, Nevada area are required to take their exam at the Independent Learning Office during the stated test times and dates. Students should schedule their exams at least one week in advance. You can contact the Independent Learning Office by phone at 775-784-4652 or through their website at http://extendendstudies.unr.edu/ilearn.htm Students living outside the Reno/Sparks, Nevada area must take the progress exams in a supervised setting during the stated test times and dates. For more information please refer to your student handbook. You may request your exams by completing the online exam request form at http://Webcampus.unr.edu The online exam request form must be submitted two weeks prior to the test date.

COURSE GRADE

Grades will be awarded using the following scale:

- 142 or higher: A
- 141 – 135: A-
- 134 – 130: B+
- 129 – 125: B
- 124 – 120: B-
- 119 – 115: C+
- 114 – 110: C
- 109 – 95: C-
- 94 – 90: D+
- 89 – 85: D
- 84 – 80: D-
- 79 or less: F

COURSE POLICIES

- Disabilities: It is recommended that students who have documented disabilities that may affect their learning or performance in this class contact the UNR Disability Services Office. This office provides a variety of valuable services to students. The instructor will make those accommodations that are requested in writing by the aforementioned office. You can reach the Disability Resource Office at (775) 784-6000.
• **Due Dates:** Assignments are due on the dates indicated in the course calendar. Assignments that are turned in late will be lowered according to the following schedule: 1 to 7 days past due = minus ½ letter grade, 7 to 14 days past due = minus a full letter grade, 15 or more days past due = no points or grades awarded for the assignment.

• **Academic Honesty:** Individual responsibility is integral to independent learning. Although students are encouraged to exchange ideas with one another, stealing or taking credit for the ideas of others is strictly forbidden. This policy applies to the ideas of other students as well as to those ideas presented in your readings. Students are encouraged instead to provide citations for information they derive from other sources. Cheating, plagiarism, or otherwise obtaining grades under false pretenses will not be tolerated. Anyone found violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action as stated in the 2004-2005 General Catalog of the University of Nevada, Reno.

**COURSE CALENDAR EXAMPLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Overview and Definitions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Etiology of Sexual Orientation</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Heterosexism and Homophobia</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Identity Formation</th>
<th>Text, chapter 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Visibility Management</td>
<td>Text, chapter 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>History of the GLBT Movement</td>
<td>Text, chapter 24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Social Institutions – Family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Institutions – Religion</td>
<td>Text, chapters 17 &amp; 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam Week</td>
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