

## **Gay and Lesbian Literature and Sexual Expression**

**Class Meets: MWF 12:40-2:10pm**

**Location and Office Hours: TBA**

### ***Course Description:***

The purpose of this course is for the participants to be able to understand what constitutes gay and lesbian literature and in turn, how its authors are able to pursue the expression of their ideals within it. Looking at literature through a queer lens enables us to see the common themes of challenges to heteronormativity, intersectionality, human issues, class and the influences of society on the queer lifestyle. While there is no single definition of queer literature, there are some obvious attributes such as queer author, subject matter, or same sex-relationships that make queer literature easier to recognize, but there are also themes that are more hidden that this course will seek to make more apparent. The struggle for acceptance and the fight for equality have been included in queer literature, and as history changes and evolves, so do ways of expression. Through looking at many different styles of writing, participants will be able to see that some



come in after 12:40 you will be counted as late. Three tardies will count toward one unexcused absence. If you are consistently late your grade will suffer unless you have an extenuating circumstance that you discuss with the professor.

***Reading Quizzes:***

At the beginning of each class period a reading quiz will be given. This quiz is to:

1. Show your comprehension and reading of the literature for class.
2. Give us discussion materi

**Assignments:**

***Paper 1: What is Gay and Lesbian Literature to You?***

This paper should reflect your attitudes and ideas on gay and lesbian literature before taking this class, while contrasting it with the themes we will brainstorm together in our first week of class. You should compare these ideas to the themes we have seen in the readings since the first week like social conditions, gender, theme encoding, etc. The introduction should reflect your earlier ideas and what you think contributed to making you think that way. Also, please include in your conclusion whether or not your ideas have changed or stayed the same, and what you think could have possibly contributed to a change or lack of change.

2-3 double spaced pages

***Paper 2: Compare and Contrast***

For this paper you should use one poem from the packet and one novel to make your analysis. This can be any of the novels we have read up to this point. This paper is to be an interpretation of gay and lesbian literature through the themes we have discussed over the course of the class. If you would like to do additional research on the background of the author, or social conditions during the point of time that is referenced, you can feel free to do so. This compare and contrast should reflect how different authors use different themes and writing methods to illustrate oppression and difference. This paper should include some thinking on why some authors make their works very openly queer, while other use encoding or other such methods to make it difficult to be read as queer. If you have another author or poem you would like to use, please consult the instructor.

3-4 double spaced pages

***Paper 3: What to Tell the World? Blog***

After reading *Full Frontal Feminism*, which is a novel that began as an Internet blog, I would like you to blog about what you think are the most pressing issues in gay and lesbian communities that we can see reflected in the work of the authors we have studied. This blog should target a certain audience and the writing should be used as a tool to gain their attention. The audience can be of your choosing, just include what age bracket, gender and demographic at the bottom of your paper. The grading of this paper is based on readability, your choices for your writing and your target audience, as well as the themes that you use. These themes can be taken from weekly current events and you may consult with your peers on this assignment. Are these modern issues that are pressing? Why do you think they are important? Why should anyone else do anything about them? What is your call to action?

3 double spaced pages







From what you have learned in this class, do you feel that the lens of gay and lesbian literature is helpful for aspects other than oppression and identity? Consider institutions like religion, politics and the military?

What is the most interesting you have learned in this class? What have you been able to apply to your life?

**Monday: Sharing of Last Papers**

**Wednesday: Sharing of Last Papers**

**Friday: Preparation for the Final, small group meetings**

**Choose what films to watch the last week of class.**

**Week 11: Dead Week and Finals**

**Monday : Class Film Choice**

**Wednesday: Class Film Choice**

**Friday: Final**