

## QS 401CAL: Contemporary Attitudes toward LGBTIQQ Issues

Fall 2011

Very Tentative Syllabus\*

(\* The professor will change this syllabus after discussion with students on their interests & knowledge.)

Professor:	Dr. Gina Masequesmay [pronounced "Mah-say-kes-may"]
Email:	gina.masequesmay@csun.edu
Office Hours:	Th 2:30 to 3:30 PM, and by appointment.
Office Venue:	Jerome Richfield 346C [enter through JR 340]
Office Phone:	818-677-7219
Professor's Website:	<a href="http://www.csun.edu/~gm61310/">http://www.csun.edu/~gm61310/</a>
Class Website	<a href="http://moodle.csun.edu">http://moodle.csun.edu</a> - You need to log in to view the readings
Class Info:	Thursdays 4:00 to 6:45 PM, SH 190, #18287

### Course Catalog Description

*Advanced Topics in Queer Studies.* This course will carry out research including interviews, focus groups, and surveys to capture CSUN campus attitudes toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexual, queer and questioning people. Students are to write a final paper based on their research and findings integrating with reading materials and class discussions about how best to work toward social justice.

### Instructor's Course Description

Queer Studies is an attempt to challenge the status quo and deconstruct what is taken-for-granted as normal. It is both an academic and a political project that interrogates heteronormative knowledge and institutions. A social constructionist framework that examines the nexus between power and knowledge guides multiple disciplinary approaches in this class to examine contemporary issues facing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexual, queer and questioning (lgbtiqq) people. Given the attention to the recent spates of queer teen suicides and the move on CSUN campus toward establishing a queer resource center, this course would like to engage in these discourses by providing needed data to advocate for a queer resource center and to advance understanding about lgbtiqq lives. This course explores contemporary attitudes toward lgbtiqq issues as well as lgbtiqq needs. The class will work in groups to conduct surveys using [surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) as well as conduct interviews and focus groups. Specific topics and projects will be determined by groups' interests. A final research paper or report will be used to initiate or support political projects (e.g., queer resource center, ally project) that advance lgbtiqq rights and liberation.

### Course Learning Objectives

QS 401 has the following course learning objectives:

1. Explore issues and needs of lgbtiqq students on campus via different research methods.
2. Identify, analyze and prioritize needs of lgbtiqq people with an understanding of how these needs are shaped by nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, class and other identifications.
3. Provide students with hands-on experience of a research project that merges theories and politics into a praxis of liberation. That is, exploring solutions/interventions to the needs of lgbtiqq students by engaging in different group projects.
4. Provide students with the opportunity of a final research paper or report by practicing to sort through the literature and data, compose a thesis or argument, support the thesis with evidence and compose an annotated bibliography.

These course objectives meet all three **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) of the Queer Studies Minor Program** and provide students with opportunities to demonstrate proficiency in them.

1. Students will have a broad understanding of the histories and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexed, and queer people and communities, with an understanding of how these are shaped by nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, class and other identifications
2. Students will understand and reflect critically on central theories in the fields of queer studies and transgender studies, with a comprehension of how these are shaped by nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, class and other identifications.
3. Students will be able to relate central theories in the fields of queer studies and transgender studies to political, cultural and intellectual issues pertinent to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer communities and reflect critically on these relationships.

### Texts Required

Assigned digital readings are posted on Moodle weekly schedule. Most are from journal articles or book chapters. In addition, there will be extra articles for homework or in-class reading dependent on students' interests and current events. I will post them online.

### Course Requirements and Grading

Attendance & Participation	20	Points	5	%
Homework assignments / Class exercises	100		25	
Reading Presentations & Notes (2)	100		25	
Research Paper or Report	100		25	
Final Group Presentation of Project	40		10	
Assessment Paper	40		10	
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>%</b>

**Grading** is based on a strict scale of 400 points:

380 – 400	A	320 – 332	B-	269 – 279	D+
360 – 379	A-	309 – 319	C+	253 – 268	D
349 – 359	B+	293 – 308	C	240 – 252	D-
333 – 348	B	280 – 292	C-	Below 240	F

The **course format** basically runs as a seminar. It consists of small lectures, films, group activities and presentations, and discussions. Students should read the assigned reading(s) BEFORE coming to class. I expect students to be prepared and ready to engage in class discussion based on the readings. **Attendance & participation** account for 5% of your grade or 20 points. You must be present to participate. Students' thoughtful contribution to class discussion is expected. Full participation can be achieved when students have done the readings and homework assignments and are ready for full class engagement.

Depending on students' specific interests, this course requires students to be in group projects that involve library researching, creating and conducting surveys, interviewing, and/or conducting focus groups. In order to facilitate the research and political projects in this class, students will be asked from time to time to do **homework assignments or class exercises** that will prepare students for the following week's discussion. These homework assignments and class exercises will account for 50% of the grade or 200 points. The class exercises and homework assignments vary in points but many tend to be about 20 points each. They are means to assess students' comprehension of the course materials as well as to move the projects forward.

In addition to the hands-on work, students are required work in a group to provide **notes and presentations of two assigned readings** that make up 100 points or 25% of the grade. By teaching each other about the readings and sharing in the reading notes, students will be more prepared in writing up their research paper or report on their group project. The **research paper or report** is 25% of the grade or 100 points and is due on final's day. The final day involves a **final group presentation** of your project. This presentation accounts for 10% of your grade. Lastly, an **assessment paper** that makes up 10% of your grade is due on final's day to provide the professor with your feedback on group members and your experiences in the group project. It is a self-reflexive piece as well as an evaluation of group members' contributions.

Each student is highly encouraged to see the instructor during office hour or by appointment at least once so that I will have a chance to know you and that you can ask me questions about class, minoring in QS, graduate school and career options. If you have any struggles (e.g., work, family, learning disability), it would also be good to let me know ahead of time. If I know ahead, we can work around your obstacles.

### A Note from the Center on Disabilities

Students with disabilities must register with the **Center on Disabilities** and complete a services agreement each semester. Staff within the Center will verify the existence of a disability based on the documentation provided and approve accommodations. Students who are approved for test taking accommodations must provide an Alternative Testing Form to their faculty member signed by a counselor in the Center on Disabilities prior to making testing arrangements. The Center on Disabilities is located in Bayramian Hall, room 110. Staff can be reached at 818.677.2684.

### **A Note on the Rules of Scholarly Discourse in the University\*\***

In this course we will be discussing very complex issues of which all of us have strong feelings and, in most cases, unfounded attitudes. It is essential that we approach this endeavor with our minds open to evidence that may conflict with our presuppositions. Moreover, it is vital that we treat each other's opinions and comments with courtesy even when they diverge and conflict with our own. We must avoid personal attacks and the use of *ad hominem* arguments to invalidate each other's positions. Instead, we must develop a culture of civil argumentation, wherein all positions have the right to be defended and argued against in intellectually reasoned ways. It is this standard that everyone must accept in order to stay in this class; a standard that applies to all inquiry in the regularly, but whose observance is especially important in a course whose subject matter is so emotionally charged.

[\*\*From UCLA Professor Melvin Oliver's Sociology 156 syllabus, Fall 1991.]

### **Additional Advice from Your Professor**

Let's humanize our experience! I highly encourage you to see me during office hour or by appointment at least once (you need to do it anyway for 10 points) so that I will have a chance to know you and that you can ask me questions about class, majoring/minoring, graduate school, and career options. If you have any struggles (e.g., financial difficulties, family obligations, learning disability), please let me know ahead so we can work around them.

To get the most out of this class, you should:

- actively engage in the course materials (do the assigned work on time)
- listen mindfully to thoughts, experiences, and emotions shared by others (to understand; not to judge)
- accept that there are usually more than two ways of viewing the world and that your perspective is shaped by your limited experience in the world
- remain open to new ideas that may conflict with your own for it is in conflict that we can learn and grow

Because the issues discussed in this class can be controversial and can evoke strong emotions, please temper your questions, answers and comments with respect for others' differences in opinions and with patience for others' unskilled expressions so that we can create a **safe environment for learning** issues of which we might be ignorant or misinformed. The best way to do this is to first see our common humanity with our strengths and weaknesses in a struggle to survive and to be accepted/loved. Once we can see this, we can become more open to differences and can always remember to return to this commonality when we are frustrated, angry, confused, condescending, hurt, etc. As a class, if we can be mindful that what we know and feel are based on our limited experiences in the world, then we can try to be less judgmental and more aware of how our reactions and emotions to differing ideas are based on our own limited interaction in the world. While logic and social scientific evidence can help us through muddy thinking, our strong emotions can steer us in other ways. Hence, be thoughtful, self-reflexive and committed to fostering a safe space in the classroom to discuss difficult issues that will encourage each of us to grow and expand our mind, and in the process, hopefully to also open our heart.

This class uses Moodle where updates are made at the end of the week and students are encouraged to view it to stay on top of things they might have missed when absent. Please also befriend your classmates for help in catching up and to collaborate on some class assignments and to study together.

## **Course Schedule for QS 401, Fall 2011**

### **Week 1, 9/1**

#### **Introduction**

- Overview of course syllabus and expectations of professor
  - Sign-In Sheet (#; Name; Enrollment status)
  - Go over syllabus – What is QS and what are this course's objectives?
    - Course depends on research skills, knowledge and project interests of students.
- Introduction of students and professor
  - Student Introduction: Name and “What most people may not know about me, but I . . .”
  - Discuss students' interests and expectations (coming out, health, academic, dating issues & more)
  - Discuss professor's expectations of students
- LGBTIQQ Perspectives and Social Justice
  - Fish analogy and critical perspectives: knowledge and power nexus
  - Standpoint theory, social constructionist approach, queer theory and deconstructive politics
- **HOMEWORK:** Sign into Moodle & fill out your profile; Do or view the survey on lgbtiqq experiences and give feedback. Also view the preliminary data of this survey.

**Week 2, 9/8** [Please note that I will be out of town this day and your class meeting will just be with the librarian. There will be no office hour this day]

***Library Research – Meet in Oviatt Lab B with Librarian Lynn Lampert***

- Learning to use library resources
- **Class exercise 1 on knowledge and interest**, due next meeting
- **HWK Readings:** *API LGBT Identities; Sexism; Profile of an FTM Transsexual Straight Man*
- **HWK:** Film “Out Rage ‘69” 55 min. Producer/Director/Writer Arthur Dong. Production Values, Inc. 1995.
- Recommended: If you have not seen the film “Kinsey,” please do so.

**Week 3, 9/15**

***Ally Training - Ally Handouts***

- An overview of LGBTIQQ issues
  - Ally Training
  - Discuss other basic questions from Exercise 1
- Discuss lgbtqiq experiences survey feedback and its data and improvement
  - What do we know and what else do we want to know
  - From this data, questions for attitudes survey.
- Logistics: Working with a tentative syllabus given the nature of political projects
  - Identify projects and theories to cover (lgbtqiq experiences, str8 attitudes, how to intervene)
  - Planning backward
- Student projects, sharing, rearranging and coordinating with efforts on campus and beyond
  - **Guest Speaker from the LAGL Center on their efforts**
  - Divide students into project groups and share contact information
- **HWK Readings** (for group presentations next week):
  - Pfohl’s “Images of Deviance and Social Control”
  - Rubin’s “Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality”
  - Van Leuven’s “I Need a Screw: Workplace Sexualization as an Interactional Achievement”
  - Fausto-Sterling’s “How to Build a Man”
  - Wittig’s “One is Not Born a Woman”
  - Collier, Rosaldo and Yanagisakio’s “Is There a Family? New Anthropological Views”
  - Introduction to Queer theory

**Week 4, 9/22**

***The Politics & Theories of Sex and Gender and Sexuality***

- Critical Perspectives and the queering of everything?
  - Discuss 7 assigned readings
- Discuss data of survey on lgbtqiq experiences
- Identifying questions for survey on attitudes
- Updates on efforts on campus for lgbtqiq rights, visibility and liberation (leftover of last week’s discussion)
- **HWK Readings** (for group presentations next week):
  - “The New Politics of Desire” - Bangkok Post
  - Hijras article
  - Emergence of Queer Vietnamese America
  - Negotiating Multiple Identities in a Queer Vietnamese Support Group
- **HWK:** View attitudes survey and give feedback

### Week 5, 9/29

#### *Intersections of Race, Class, Gender, Sexuality, Religion & Geopolitics and Logistics of Group Projects*

- Film “Ke kulana he mahu: Remembering a Sense of Place.” 67 min. By Brent Anbe, Jaymee Carvajal, Kathryn Xian. Published [Honolulu]: Zang Pictures, c2001. (N11509)
  - Colonialism, Capitalism and Christianity
  - Mahu, Hijras, and other genders and sexualities
  - Queer experiences marked by intersectionalities
  - What does support mean?
- Introduction to research: Epistemology; Theories and Hypotheses; Methodologies; Focus Group, Interview & Survey; Reliability and Validity; Ethics
- Discuss and improve survey questions on attitudes
- Finalize project groups and identify and assign tasks
- **HWK:** Library research on your group project
- **HWK Readings:**
  - Cole’s “Containing AIDS: Magic Johnson and Post[Reagan] America”
  - Cohen’s “Contested Membership: Black Gay Identities and the Politics of AIDS”
  - <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2010/nov/16/wake-it-gets-better-campaign>
- Recommended film to see before next class: “The Celluloid Closet” 102 min. 1996.

### Week 6, 10/6

#### *Media Images & Perceptions*

- The role of the media on perceptions of “normal”
  - Film “Further Off the Straight & Narrow: New Gay Visibility on Television 1998-2006.” 61 min. Producer, director and editor, Katherine Sender. Published Northampton, MA: Media Education Foundation, c2006. (N11460)
  - “It Gets Better Project”
- Discuss films and readings
- Finalizing questions for the attitudes survey and identify strategies to get responses
- Formulating questions for the focus groups
  - Discuss library research results of groups (annotated bibliography)
  - Open vs. Close-ended questions for focus groups
- **HWK:** Finish Questions for Focus Group & additional research; Identify 5 to 12 people for focus group
- **HWK Readings:**
  - Lisa Diamond’s Sexual Fluidity
  - Klein’s Sexual Orientation Grid
  - Gender Queer Reading
  - The Politics of Desire – Bangkok Post
  - Foucault’s “The Perverse Implantation”
  - Gagne and Tewksbury’s “Conformity Pressures and Gender Resistance among Transgendered Individuals”
  - Rosario’s “The Biology of Gender and the Construction of Sex?”

### Week 7, 10/13 [National Coming Out Week! 10/11 is National Coming Out Day]

#### *Identities, Fluidity and the Social Construction of Desire*

- Discuss readings
- Finalize tasks for attitudes survey
- Finalize focus groups’ questions and practice conducting focus group
- **HWK:** Conduct focus groups
- **HWK Readings:** Herek’s articles

**Week 8, 10/20**

*Focus Group as Generator of Hypotheses*

- Discuss findings from Focus Group
  - Identifying issues and generating hypotheses
  - Refining the survey questions one last time
  - Discuss Herek's articles
- **HWK:** Conduct attitudes survey amongst friends and getting feedback

**Week 9, 10/27**

*Research and understanding the world, an on-going process*

- Discuss preliminary data and efforts
- Discuss hypotheses and data
- Refine attitude survey questions
- Create a shorter hard copy survey for strangers
- **HWK:** Another attempt of surveying amongst friends and getting feedback

**Week 10, 11/3**

*Relevant Community Issues*

- More on research ethics in vulnerable communities
- Finalizing the attitudes survey and strategies
- **HWK:** Conduct the survey

**Week 11, 11/10 [November 8<sup>th</sup> Election!]**

*Survey and Updates*

- Discuss preliminary data and strategies
- Diversifying the respondents' pool

**Week 12, 11/17**

*Continuing with Survey Assessment and Updates*

- **HWK:** Data analysis

**Week 13, 11/24 is Thanksgiving. No class!**

**Week 14, 12/1**

*Assessing the data*

- Discuss data analyses

**Week 15, 12/8**

*Preparation*

- Discuss report/research paper outline
- Discuss content of presentations

**Week 16 12/15**

*Final*

- FINAL DAY is on 12/15, Thursday, from 5:30 to 7:30 PM in the same room.
  - **Due: Report/Research Paper, Group Presentations, Assessment Paper**

## ADVICES TO STUDENTS ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Here is a **list of things TO AVOID** in being a professional student:

- 1) Emailing/phoning me to find out what you missed in class. Come to office hours to find out or ask your classmates. Please befriend your classmates and ask them what you missed. Assignments will usually be posted on the web end of the week. Below are spaces to write down 2 of your classmates contact information.

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- 2) Having your pager/phone/video game on while the professor conducts class.
- 3) Reading materials (e.g., newspapers/magazines) not relevant to class activities during class.
- 4) Disrupting class discussion by having your private conversation with other students.
- 5) Sleeping in class. If you are not feeling well, rest at home. The classroom is not your bedroom.
- 6) Disrupting class by arriving late or leaving early.
- 7) Faxing/emailing me your paper. If I don't have your paper by the due date in class, you'll have a zero.
- 8) Disrespecting others in class, including name-calling, cat-calling, snickering, disrupting.
- 9) Cheating. Please see <http://www.csun.edu/~vcspc00g/303/achonesty.html> and [http://library.csun.edu/Research\\_Assistance/plagiarism.htm/](http://library.csun.edu/Research_Assistance/plagiarism.htm/)

**Things to do** to be a professional student:

1. Be organized and allocate study time (~ 8 hrs/wk) for this class as you do for your other classes.
2. Attend class regularly and arrive on time.
3. Read assigned readings or do assignment before class and arrive prepared to discuss readings or assignment.
4. Be respectful of everyone in class and keep an open mind.
5. Contribute positively to class discussion by active listening and thoughtful commenting.
6. ASK QUESTIONS when you don't understand. Remember, the best way to learn is to ask questions.
7. Hand assignments in on time.
8. Visit the professor during office hour for extra help, if need be, or just to familiarize yourself to speaking to your professor and to keep in touch in case you ever need a recommendation letter.
9. Be proactive in your education and make the most out of it. You have already paid for it.

## CAMPUS RESOURCES

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>LOCATION/URL</u>
<b>Asian American Studies Department</b>	X4966	<a href="http://www.csun.edu/aas">http://www.csun.edu/aas</a>
<b>The Advising Resource Center / EOP</b> provides academic advisement services to all undecided or undeclared students.	x2108	Student Services Bldg 210. <a href="http://www.csun.edu/eop/arc.html">http://www.csun.edu/eop/arc.html</a>
<b>Career Center</b>	x2878	University Hall Suite 105 <a href="http://www.csun.edu/~hfcar009/">http://www.csun.edu/~hfcar009/</a>
<b>Center on Disabilities</b>	x2684	<a href="http://www.csun.edu/cod/center.html">http://www.csun.edu/cod/center.html</a> sdr@csun.edu
<b>Counseling Services</b>	x2366 x7834 TDD	Student Services Bldg 520 <a href="http://www.csun.edu/~cs46896/">http://www.csun.edu/~cs46896/</a>
<b>Learning Resource Center</b>	x2033	Student Services Building (SB408) <a href="http://www.csun.edu/~hflrc007/">http://www.csun.edu/~hflrc007/</a>
<b>National Center on Deafness</b>	x2054	<a href="http://ncod.csun.edu/">http://ncod.csun.edu/</a>
<b>Positive Space Program and Ally Training</b> – resources to support the LGBTIQQ community.	X7219	Gina.Masequesmay@csun.edu <a href="http://www.csun.edu/eop/positivespace">http://www.csun.edu/eop/positivespace</a>
<b>Women's Center</b>	x2780	<a href="http://www.csun.edu/~ws20500/center.html">http://www.csun.edu/~ws20500/center.html</a>
<b>The Writing Center</b>	x2033	The Writing Center (SB414) <a href="http://www.csun.edu/~hflrc006/">http://www.csun.edu/~hflrc006/</a>
<b>Guide to do a Library Research</b>		<a href="http://library.csun.edu/strategies.html">http://library.csun.edu/strategies.html</a>

## QUESTIONS FOR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Here are some general questions to help you with critically reading articles and viewing films. More specific questions on films will be given in class. This page serves as a general guide for the rest of this semester.

### READING CRITICALLY

#### Questions to Answer:

- 1. What is the larger context of why this article was written? To what is the author responding?**  
I hope that you will begin to ask this question for everything you read. All perspectives are partial and you need to not only know where **the article** is situated in the larger sociopolitical debate but also what it is saying and not saying or implying about a specific issue. This question may best be answered last after you understand the author's main argument. This question is about the larger debate that the author is engaged in or the implication of his/her work given his/her thesis. The author's own background is mostly a factor in the reason for the essay. [e.g., The article is about "lazy welfare mothers" and thus it contributes to the debate for welfare reform.]
- 2. What is the author's main argument?**  
Search the reading for the thesis statement and either quote or paraphrase it with citation (reference with page number). Explain clearly what the main argument of the author is. If question #1 is about motive, this question is about what the crime is. [e.g., The main argument by the author is that welfare mothers are lazy and just abusing taxpayers' generosity.]
- 3. What are the evidences the author used to support his/her argument?**  
Good scholarly work requires a thesis and supporting evidence. What kind of evidence does the author have to support the thesis? How was the data compiled? Elaborate on evidence (at least 3 items) the author makes to support his/her thesis. [Is the evidence based on personal anecdotes or beliefs, on scholarly national survey research, on limited samples, etc. and what are the evidentiary data?]
- 4. Are the arguments compelling?**  
This question is meant to remind you to question authority rather than blindly accept what is dished out or packaged to you. Sometimes people have facts that don't support their argument. So, you need to make sure their facts back the argument the author makes. Just because something is written, doesn't mean it's true. [Despite the fact that the author may have support for his/her argument, can that evidence be generalized to the larger population or other populations? What is the reliability (duplication) and validity (operationalization) of this work? Can you come up with counterarguments?]
- 5. What questions arose for you from reading this article?**  
This is to urge you to reflect on what you read and become an active reader instead of a passive recipient of information. This is to help you apply what you just learned. [What issues did the author not address?]
- 6. Any other reactions you have from reading this article? Relates to some other issues? Personal reaction?**  
Does the information challenge your original thoughts and assumptions? Do you find yourself resistant to the information? Why do you think that is so? These are good questions to think for yourself as you become more reflexive of the information around you, those that you readily accept and those that challenge the foundation of your values.

### VIEWING FILMS CRITICALLY

#### General Questions to Answer for Films/Events:

- 1. What is this film about?** (e.g., What is the setting? Who are involved? What happened or how did this end? What is the event? Who presented and sponsored it? Who were the targeted audience?)
- 2. What do you think is the point or message of this film?**
- 3. What do you think is the larger context to which this film is responding?**
- 4. How does this film fit into this class on LGBTI issues?**