

## Introduction to LGBTQ Studies

### Course Information

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| Course Number: | WGST 205   |
| Course Title:  | Introduction to LGBTQ Studies  |
| Section:       | 500  |
| Time:          | Hybrid. Tuesdays- 12:45pm to 2pm Online; Thursdays 12:45pm -2pm in class |
| Location:      | Tuesdays- Online; Thursdays in HECC 201                                  |
| Credit Hours:  | 3  |

### Instructor Details

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Instructor:   | Koyel Khan   |
| Office:       | LASB 355   |
| Phone:        | 979-845-5133   |
| E-Mail:       | <a href="mailto:kkhan@tamu.edu">kkhan@tamu.edu</a>   |
| Office Hours: | 12 noon to 2:30pm, Wednesdays via zoom.<br>Please email in advance and make an appointment, and I will send you the link |

### Course Description

Interdisciplinary survey of the histories of and theories regarding Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ+) identities and communities; the social construction of sexuality and gender; institutional ways in which homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia are systematically deployed; advocacy by and on behalf of LGBTQ+ individuals; evolution of desire and subjectivity.

This course is a hybrid course. This course will meet in-person only on Thursdays. Tuesdays involve various kinds of online work. Students are required to participate in the various online work on Tuesdays during class time. Please refer to the course schedule for the structure of the course, assigned content, due dates of graded assignments, and other relevant information.

### Course Prerequisites

None

### Special Course Designation

This course is the foundational course for Texas A&M University's [Minor in LGBTQ Studies](#). Please click on the link for more information about this minor.

## Course Learning Outcomes

- To explain the historical and social contexts that have impacted the modern LGBTQ community in different ways.
- To discuss and debate social constructionist and essentialist theories of sexuality and gender and analyze how these perspectives understand LGBTQ identities.
- To understand the relationships between LGBTQ identities and other intersecting identities such as race, class, nationality, (dis)ability, among others.
- To understand the key vocabularies used to describe LGBTQ identities, and the importance of using accurate vocabulary for inclusivity.
- To analyze the social, legal, and political structures that reinforce cis/heteronormativity, homo/bi/transphobia, and heterosexism.

## Textbook and/or Resource Materials

REQUIRED BOOK: *Finding Out: An Introduction to LGBT Studies*, by Deborah Meem and others. Sage Publications, 4th Edition.

Apart from the textbook, other required materials will be used. These other required course materials will be provided.

This course uses CANVAS as our learning management system. You can access canvas at [canvas.tamu.edu](https://canvas.tamu.edu).

## Grading Policy

### Exams (100 points total):

Two exams need to be completed for this class. Each exam is worth 50 points. Additional information regarding each exam will be provided in class. Make-up exams will only be given to students who have an excused absence as defined by the university. Notifications of such absences need to be provided by the student. The format of the make-up exams may be different than the original exam.

Exam 1: **Thursday, Oct 10, 2024** (during class time).

Exam 2: **Tuesday, November 26, 2024** (during class time)

### Online Group Discussion Posts (10 posts, 15 points each = 150 points total):

Throughout this semester, online group discussions are scheduled for the online days (Tuesdays). Small groups will be formed at the beginning of the week (starting Week 2). Students will be assigned to groups by the instructor. The members of each group will need to connect with each other and set up their own virtual meeting space to do the online group work on the assigned days and during the designated time. Please refer to the course schedule to note the days of the scheduled online group

discussions. In these online group discussions, the group members will discuss the topics related to the materials assigned for that week. During these online discussions, students will be engaging in critical thinking. Students will synthesize and analyze the information from the readings and other assigned materials. Students will pursue lines of inquiry that emerge through these discussions. During these group discussions, students must search and gather academic information using the online academic resources available through the university library. The students will then write the discussion post incorporating the points that emerged in the group discussion. These discussion posts are referred to as GDs in the course schedule. Only one post per group is required, however, each group member must contribute to the creation of the written material. In addition, each group member must upload the created written document on Canvas. Therefore, even though as a group there will be one jointly written document; each group member must individually upload that document in the submission portal on Canvas and mention their group number. The writing must be the original work of the group, and must include proper citations. Plagiarism is taken very seriously. Please refer to the university rules surrounding plagiarism.

The post should be a minimum of 200 words, and should incorporate at least one external peer-reviewed academic source. ASA (American Sociological Association)-formatted in-text citation, using the author-date method must be provided. The post must conclude with an ASA-formatted references list. Thus, students must read the assigned materials, identify a peer-reviewed journal article relevant to the post, share the findings of that article and explain how that connects with the assigned material.

The ASA citation style guide is provided on Canvas under “Files”. Resources on how to identify peer-reviewed sources are provided under “Files”. Students are required to view these informational videos before starting their first GD assignment.

These posts or GDs must be submitted under “Assignments” on Canvas.

When the class meets on Thursdays, the groups will need to share their main discussion points with the entire class. This is part of the overall grade for each GD assignment. Please refer to the course schedule to note the days when groups need to share the main points of their post in class.

The following table provides the points allotted for the various sections of the online discussion posts:

| Points | Criteria   |
|--------|--|
| 6      | effective written communication of the main arguments/core themes of the assigned reading/s, and meeting the word count. |
| 2      | effective incorporation of at least one relevant external peer-reviewed academic resource                                |
| 2      | grammar and syntax   |
| 2      | proper citations/references  |
| 3      | satisfactory in-class verbal presentation of the main points of the GD   |

LGBTQ Issues project (50 points total):

Students will work on a group project based on any issue related to the LGBTQ community of their choice. This project has several components. The components are discussed briefly below. They will be discussed in more detail in class.

- A) The group will first identify an LGBTQ issue that they are interested in (5 points).
- B) The group will conduct research on the scholarship surrounding this issue. How does this issue impact LGBTQ communities? (10 points)
- C) The group will discuss steps that can potentially address the causes of the issue, or reduce the impact of the problems caused by the social issue (10 points).
- D) Students in the group will then conduct research on an LGBTQ-related advocacy group that focuses on the LGBTQ issue selected by the group. The advocacy group can be international, national, or regional. The students will provide a brief history of the advocacy group, identify the objectives of the advocacy group, and discuss some measures taken by the advocacy group to achieve their aims (15 points).
- E) Apart from the content portion, the presentation portion is also graded. The students will present the above components in class using a PowerPoint presentation (10 points).

The overall presentation should be around fifteen minutes. The dates are indicated on the course schedule. The order in which groups will present will be determined in the days following the start of the semester. The groups will be formed by Week 6 of the semester.

Critical Reflection Paper (50 points): Students will write a critical reflection paper, due at the end of the semester (please refer to the course schedule). Students will reflect on the materials covered throughout this course and critically engage with the materials and reflect on them. This paper is for students to express how they find themselves responding to the materials. The reflection should include (but is not limited to) interpretation and expression of the ideas related to the material, and impact of the material on their understanding of self and society. The reflection should be a minimum of 600 words.

**Grading:** This course has 350 possible points. Students will receive a grade based on the points earned by them. The breakdown is given below.

- A= 315-350
- B= 280-314
- C= 245-279
- D= 210-244
- F= 209 and below

## Late Work Policy

Late work (submitting an assignment after the deadline) is not accepted unless the student has an excused absence as defined by the university. If a student is unable to submit an assignment due to reasons that are excused, make-up assignments will be provided. Please see [Student Rule 7](#).

## Technology Policy

Students are expected to bring a laptop or device through which they can access Canvas and university library resources. Laptops are available at the library and can be borrowed by the students if needed.

## Course Schedule

Note 1: This schedule is subject to change. If changes are made to this schedule, it will be communicated to students in class and/or through Canvas.

Note 2: "TXT" indicates the reading is in the textbook assigned for this course (*Finding Out: An Introduction to LGBT Studies*, by Deborah Meem and others. Sage Publications, 4th Edition). All other readings and materials will be made available through a link in the syllabus or through Canvas.

Note 3: Students must be prepared with the assigned material for each day before class time.

Note 4: Online Group Discussion Posts are referred to as GDs in the course schedule. There are ten online group discussion posts. Each is referred to as GD followed by the number. Group Discussion post number one is referred to as GD1; Group Discussion post number six is referred to as GD6, and so on.

### Week 1

Tues 8/20 (online): Overview of Policies and discussion of Syllabus

Read: Syllabus

View: Links under "Identify Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles" (Canvas: "Files" folder)

Attend: Zoom meeting during class time.

Thurs 8/22 (classroom): Introduction to LGBTQ Studies.

Read: TXT Introduction to the Reader (reading must be completed before class time)

**Week 2**

Tues 8/27 (online): Historical Perspective

Read: TXT Chapter 1 (reading must be completed before class time)

Discuss: Discuss the material with your group members through online meeting. Identify and incorporate a relevant peer-reviewed journal article.

**Online Group Discussion Post: GD1 due at the end of class time.**

Thurs 8/29 (classroom): Historical Perspective

Discussion of the concepts in class

**Groups must share the main points of their GD post with the class (part of GD grade)**

**Week 3**

Tues 9/3 (online): Sexology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

Read: TXT Chapter 2 (reading must be completed before class time)

Discuss: Discuss the material with your group members through online meeting during class time. Identify and incorporate a relevant peer-reviewed journal article.

**Online Group Discussion Post: GD2 due at the end of class time**

Thurs 9/5 (classroom): Sexology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

Discussion of the concepts in class

**Groups must share the main points of their GD post with the class (part of GD grade)**

**Week 4**

Tues 9/10 (online): Sexology, Activism, and Science

Read: TXT Chapter 3 (reading must be completed before class time)

Discuss: Discuss the material with your group members through online meeting during class time. Identify and incorporate a relevant peer-reviewed journal article.

**Online Group Discussion Post: GD3 due at the end of class time**

Thurs 9/12 (classroom): Sexology, Activism, and Science

Discussion of the concepts in class

**Groups must share the main points of their GD post with the class (part of GD grade)**

**Week 5**

Tues 9/17 (online): Imagining Liberation

Read: TXT Chapter 4 (reading must be completed before class time)

View: *The Times of Harvey Milk* (link provided on Canvas). This documentary needs to be incorporated in GD4. Watch documentary before class time.

Discuss: Discuss the material with your group members through online meeting during class time. Identify and incorporate a relevant peer-reviewed journal article.

**Online Group Discussion Post: GD4 due at the end of class time**

Thurs 9/19 (classroom): Imagining Liberation

Discussion of the concepts in class

**Groups must share the main points of their GD post with the class (part of GD grade)**

**Week 6**

Tues 9/24 (online): Queer Normalization and Beyond

Read: TXT Chapter 5 (reading must be completed before class time)

View: *1985* (link provided on Canvas). This film needs to be incorporated in GD5. Watch the film before class time.

Discuss: Discuss the material with your group members through online meeting during class time. Identify and incorporate a relevant peer-reviewed journal article.

**Online Group Discussion Post: GD5 due at the end of class time**

Thurs 9/26 (classroom): Queer Normalization and Beyond

Discussion of the concepts in class

**Groups must share the main points of their GD post with the class (part of GD grade)**

**Week 7**

Tues 10/1 (online): Queer Diversities

Read: TXT Chapter 6 (reading must be completed before class time)

Discuss: Discuss the material with your group members through online meeting during class time. Identify and incorporate a relevant peer-reviewed journal article.

**Online Group Discussion Post: GD6 due at the end of class time**

Thurs 10/3 (classroom): Queer Diversities

Discussion of the concepts in class

**Groups must share the main points of their GD post with the class (part of GD grade)**

**Week 8**

Tues 10/8 (online): Fall Break—no meetings or group work

Thurs 10/10 (classroom): **Exam 1**

**Week 9**

Tues 10/15 (online): Trans Lives and Theories

Read: TXT Chapter 7 (reading must be completed before class time)

View: *Joyland* (link provided on Canvas). This film needs to be incorporated in GD7.

Watch the film before class time.

Discuss: Discuss the material with your group members through online meeting during class time. Identify and incorporate a relevant peer-reviewed journal article.

**Online Group Discussion Post: GD7 due at the end of class time**

Thurs 10/17 (classroom): Trans Lives and Theories

Discussion of the concepts in class

**Groups must share the main points of their GD post with the class (part of GD grade)**

**Week 10**

Tues 10/22 (online): Intersectionalities

Read: TXT Chapter 8 (reading must be completed before class time)

View: *Out in the Night* (link provided on Canvas). This documentary needs to be incorporated in GD8. Watch the documentary before class time.

Discuss: Discuss the material with your group members through online meeting during class time. Identify and incorporate a relevant peer-reviewed journal article.

**Online Group Discussion Post: GD8 due at the end of class time**

Thurs 10/24 (classroom): Intersectionalities

Discussion of the concepts in class

**Groups must share the main points of their GD post with the class (part of GD grade)**



**Week 11**

Tues 10/29 (online): (i) Film and Television, (ii) Digitally Queer and Trans

Read: TXT Chapter 11 and Chapter 12 (reading must be completed before class time)

View: *Celluloid Closet* (link provided on Canvas). This documentary needs to be incorporated in GD9. Watch the film before class time.

Discuss: Discuss the material with your group members through online meeting during class time. Identify and incorporate a relevant peer-reviewed journal article.

**Online Group Discussion Post: GD9 due at the end of class time**

Thurs 10/31 (classroom): (i) Film and Television, (ii) Digitally Queer and Trans

Discussion of the concepts in class

**Groups must share the main points of their GD post with the class (part of GD grade)**

**Week 12**

Tues 11/5 (online): Queer and Trans Cultures: The Search for Queer Space

Read: TXT Chapter 13 (reading must be completed before class time)

View: *Pariah* (link provided on Canvas). This film needs to be incorporated in GD10.

Watch the film before class time.

Discuss: Discuss the material with your group members through online meeting during class time. Identify and incorporate a relevant peer-reviewed journal article.

**Online Group Discussion Post: GD10 due at the end of class time**

Thurs 11/7 (classroom): Queer and Trans Cultures: The Search for Queer Space

Discussion of the concepts in class

**Groups must share the main points of their GD post with the class (part of GD grade)**

**Week 13**

Tues 11/12 (online): Work on Group Presentations

Thurs 11/14 (classroom): LGBTQ Issues Group Presentations

**Week 14**

Tues 11/19 (online): Review of Materials; Exam 2 Preparation

Thurs 11/21 (classroom): LGBTQ Issues Group Presentations

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**Week 15**

Tues 11/26 (online): **Exam 2 (during class time).**

Thurs 11/28 (classroom): Holiday- No Class

**Week 16**

**Critical Reflection Paper due on Dec 3, 2024 by 11:59pm.**

## University Policies

### Attendance Policy

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

### Makeup Work Policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Student Rule 7, or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.1](#)).

"The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.2](#)).

Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. (See [Student Rule 24](#).)

## Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."

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“Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one’s work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case” ([Section 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)).

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at [aggiehonor.tamu.edu](http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu).

## Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact the Disability Resources office on your campus (resources listed below). Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

Disability Resources is located in the Student Services Building or at (979) 845-1637 or visit [disability.tamu.edu](http://disability.tamu.edu).

## Title IX and Statement on Limits to Confidentiality

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

With the exception of some medical and mental health providers, all university employees (including full and part-time faculty, staff, paid graduate assistants, student workers, etc.) are Mandatory Reporters and must report to the Title IX Office if the employee experiences, observes, or becomes aware of an incident that meets the following conditions (see [University Rule 08.01.01.M1](#)):

- The incident is reasonably believed to be discrimination or harassment.
- The incident is alleged to have been committed by or against a person who, at the time of the incident, was (1) a student enrolled at the University or (2) an employee of the University.

Mandatory Reporters must file a report regardless of how the information comes to their attention – including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Although Mandatory Reporters must file a report, in most instances, a person who is subjected to the alleged conduct will be able to control how the report is handled, including whether or not to pursue a formal investigation. The University’s goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and to ensure access to the resources you need.

*Students wishing to discuss concerns in a confidential setting are encouraged to make an appointment with [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#).*

*Students can learn more about filing a report, accessing supportive resources, and navigating the Title IX investigation and resolution process on the University's [Title IX webpage](#).*

## Statement on Mental Health and Wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student's academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy self-care by utilizing available resources and services on your campus

*Students who need someone to talk to can contact Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) or call the TAMU Helpline (979-845-2700) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988) or at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org) [Links to an external site.](#)*

## Statement on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of educational records by limiting access to these records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their educational records and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate and misleading data through informal and formal hearings. Currently enrolled students wishing to withhold any or all directory information items may do so by going to [howdy.tamu.edu](https://howdy.tamu.edu) and clicking on the "Directory Hold Information" link in the Student Records channel on the MyRecord tab. The complete [FERPA Notice to Students](#) and the student records policy is available on the Office of the Registrar webpage.

Items that can never be identified as public information are a student's social security number, citizenship, gender, grades, GPR or class schedule. All efforts will be made in this class to protect your privacy and to ensure confidential treatment of information associated with or generated by your participation in the class.

Directory items include name, UIN, local address, permanent address, email address, local telephone number, permanent telephone number, dates of attendance, program of study (college, major, campus), classification, previous institutions attended, degrees honors and awards received, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, medical residence location and medical residence specialization.