Alternative Student Breaks

OUT to Serve
Outfront Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
Fall Quarter 2018

Facilitators

Adam Davies
(They/He)
(920) 284-8948
adamdavies2020@u.northwestern.edu

Neil Dixit
(he/him/his)
(414) 426-9495
neildixit2019@u.northwestern.edu

Savanna Ruiz
(she/her/hers)
(815) 999-7930
savannaruiz2020@u.northwestern.edu
Faculty Advisor

Dr. Paola Zamperini
(she/her/hers)
paola.zamperini@northwestern.edu
Department of Asian Languages and Cultures

Class Time and Location

Tuesdays 6-8:50 PM
Annenberg G28

Goals & Objectives

The study of gender and sexuality, LGBTQ history, queer and feminist theories, and related disciplines all have long and unique histories. In this class, we hope to provide a survey of the various methods of understanding gender and sexuality. This class will focus on United States and Western understandings of gender and sexuality, but we will attempt to engage with non-Western narratives to the best of our ability. This course will culminate in a week long service-learning trip to OUTFront Minnesota. In addition to surveying various academic, activist, and institutional methods of analyzing gender and sexuality, we will also use ASB’s model of service-learning, which demands a critical approach to service work. By deploying ASB’s model of service-learning, we can understand ways in which we can have positive, neutral, or negative impacts when working with our community partner.

By the end of the class, students should have an introductory knowledge of:

1. LGBTQ History in the United States, including history of terminology, medicine, academia, activism as they relate to LGBTQ lived experience.
2. History of Gender and Sexuality Studies at Northwestern University.
3. Contemporary contentions and representations around identity and queerness and their history.
4. Understanding of how and why our community partner exists and how the work they’re doing impacts LGBTQ communities.
5. Develop close relationships with those on the trip and with the broader ASB community.

All of us have different understandings of these terms, our shared histories, and our personal histories. We are always taking feedback and we understand that these topics can be difficult to talk about and we want to make sure the class is a safe and
comfortable place for people of all identities to service-learn and grow. Feel free to talk to us over our linked anonymous feedback form, over message/text, or in person!

**Expectations**

- Attendance on the trip at the end of the quarter is mandatory.
- Students who are able to be driver certified through Motorpool are required to obtain that certification otherwise we cannot logistically go on the trip. We will give you more information in the fall.
- Students must attend 8 out of the 10 classes, if more than one class is missed excluding family/personal emergencies then that student will not be allowed to go on the trip. Please be communicative regarding attendance.

**Grades**

This class is pass/fail. We expect to see you’re engaged with each other, the material, and us. We also expect a level of critique, self-reflection to ensure that we are remaining cognizant of experiences, identities, and topics and how they interrogate or reify dominant social structures.

**Differently Abled Students**

Students in need of accommodations with any component of this course related to a disability or other condition are encouraged to contact and register with AccessibleNU (accessiblenu@northwestern.edu; 847-467-5530). Please do not hesitate to ask for accommodation and other arrangements!

**Personal Pronouns**

Please let us know which pronouns you would like us to use if you feel comfortable doing so. You can send us a message, text, email, or talk to us in person!
Schedule

Class One
LGBTQ Terminology, Introduction to LGBTQ History: We will introduce ASB and what this trip is about! We’ll talk about the layout of the class and lay down some ground rules to facilitate productive dialogue. We’ll dive right in with what the whole LGBTQ+ soup means when people in the United States use them today, and then we’ll talk about the major events that have come to define the past century of LGBTQ history.

Assignments due Class One: Check out this anonymous feedback form (insert link); read “Accomplices, Not Allies” by Indigenous Action Media.

Class Two
Introduction to LGBTQ History Continued, and Global Context: We’ll discuss the historical context of terms we use. We’ll also pay special attention to how the medicalization of LGBTQ identities (focusing on trans and intersex bodies) affects people. We’ll also talk about ways Western European and North American terms like “gay,” “lesbian” and “trans” have been used and changed in other contexts.

Assignments due Class Two: Read excerpts from “The Argonauts” by Maggie Nelson; “Transgender History” by Susan Stryker, pages 105-111, excerpts from “In the Shadow of Stonewall: Examining Gay Transnational Politics and The Diasporic Dilemma” by Martin Manalansan.

Class Three
The “Q” Word: Queer is a term that can be empowering, hurtful, and a very useful way to understand the world around us and ourselves. “Queer” has also been used to interrogate and transgress dominant social norms, as a radical politics, and as a way to reimagine the future. In this class, we will focus on gay marriage and equality, as well as the idea of “homonormativity.” We’ll pay special attention to marginalized folks in the United States, and briefly touch on non-Western modes of understanding to acknowledge our gender-sex-sexuality paradigm is not the only one. We will also assign a fun project for you and up to two partners.

Assignments due Class Three: Excerpts from Dean Spade’s “Normal Lives”; excerpts from Cathy Cohen’s “Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens” (1997); read excerpts from “Meanwhile, Elsewhere: Science Fiction and Fantasy from Transgender Writers.”

Class Four
LGBTQ Activism, Civil Rights, and Women’s Movements: In this class, we’ll focus on major moments in LGBTQ activism. We’ll discuss the movement around HIV/AIDS during the 1980s to today. We’ll touch on ways current conceptualizations of
organizations like ACT UP can be empowering, but also marginalize certain folks. We’ll also talk about how North American and European conceptualizations of the “dark continent” of Africa allowed exploitation of Black bodies in the name of medical progress. Within the context of HIV/AIDS activism, but also within broader US society, we’ll talk about the pathologization of LGBTQ identities. We’ll also discuss the ways LGBTQ movements have mirrored Black feminist movements, and the broader Civil Rights Movement. We’ll also have some in-class time for some reflection on the quarter so far.

Assignments due Class Four: Read excerpts from “Democracy, Expertise, and HIV/AIDS Activism” by Steve Epstein; read excerpts from “AIDS, Rhetoric, and Medical Knowledge” by Alex Preda; read excerpts from “Inventing African AIDS” by Cindy Patton.

**Class Five**
Where are we going and what are our leaders into? **Who + what of the site, and why we chose it.** Adam, Savanna, and Neil will talk to y’all about what they’re into with these subjects. We will talk about trans-inclusive education and foster care policies. We’ll talk about institutional changes and their impacts, and organizations such as the Transformative Justice Law Project. Then we will shift gears to queer representation in the media and what the very real impacts of representation are. Finally, we’ll once again decenter white and Western epistemology and look at the interplay between heteropatriarchy, nationalism, and the production of the “citizen” through the lens of South Asian diasporas.

Assignments due Class Five: Show your multimedia project about a term or concept relating to this course.

**Class Six**
In Class: We will be watching an episode of Queer Eye (2018). We will be discussing the broader impacts of mainstream media that engages with LGBTQ communities. What does it mean to have 5 very queer people attempting to redo predominantly straight men’s looks? Does Queer Eye leave space for a transgressive queer politics, or does it subscribe to an assimilationist politics? Does it do both?

Assignments due Class Six: Post the link to a LGBTQ-centered music video.

**Class Seven**
In Class: Modern day movements for LGBTQ rights—especially transgender rights which has become a moral battleground in the wake of North Carolina’s HB2 and gay marriage. Also the LGBTQ rights movement in relation to the Black Lives Matter
movement and the indigenous rights movements. Also conversion therapy movements in the modern day.

Assignments due Class Seven: Read excerpt from: Boy Erased; find a contemporary issue affecting LGBTQ lives today and post an article, video, vine, or other form of media that discusses it. It can be humorous, serious, academic, or pop culture.

Class Eight
In Class: We will delve into the world of service-learning. We will discuss voluntourism, when helping hurts, and hopefully you will get to meet ASB’s advisor Val Buchanan. We will dig into service-learning to understand its benefits and limitations. We will also discuss positive, negative, and neutral impacts in the context of our community partner, long-term struggles for LGBT-rights, and what we can realistically do on a week-long service trip. The second half of the class we will focus on our personal hopes, values, and concerns regarding the upcoming trip. This trip focuses on issues that affect queer folks, and that might include issues we have personally confronted. We think it’s important to provide a space where we can talk and address our emotions.

Assignments due Class Eight: Dig into the website for the organization we’re going to. Think about which narratives they are sharing, which narratives are they trying to push against. Write a brief discussion post about your thoughts and a part of the website that caught your eye.

Class Nine
In Class: We will watch the film Saturday Church and we’ll discuss some of the major themes and give students an opportunity to compare some of their experiences with themes expounded upon in the movie.

Assignments Before the Trips: Fill out Participant Wellness Form; take a look at the packing list; send us any questions or concerns you have! Get Excited!

Reference List