

Dr. Dejan Kuzmanovic dkuzmano@uwsp.edu CCC 427, 346-4719	English 287: Gay and Lesbian Literature Wed 5:30-8:00 pm, CCC 128 Spring 2020	Office Hours: Mon 2:00-3:30 Wed 3:30-5:00 and by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

We will analyze representations of LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer) individuals and relationships in literary texts belonging to different genres and historical periods. Through a mixture of lectures and discussions, we will observe how the meanings and values that societies assign to such relationships vary culturally and historically. Our focus will be on twentieth-century British and American texts because “homosexuality” as we know it today is largely a modern, Western concept. We will address diverse ethical, political, psychological, and other issues related to homosexual -- and other sexual -- identities and experiences. Our premise is that studying homosexuality implies also exploring the changing meanings of heterosexuality and sexuality in general. This approach questions the monolithic conception of a single LGBTQ community and emphasizes gender, racial, class, generational, and ideological diversity within it.

SAFE SPACE:

The classroom must be a safe space for all students, requiring appropriate classroom conduct. Showing respect for every individual – regardless of their age, sex, race, ethnicity, religious or political opinions, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other forms of difference – is essential for everyone’s success and wellbeing. The Golden Rule: treat others as you expect to be treated.

We will not avoid controversial or uncomfortable topics. Instead, we will ask ourselves and each other why certain topics offend us or make us uncomfortable. And we will always be respectful and mindful of other people’s opinions and feelings. We can certainly disagree with each other, but dismissive or insulting attitudes toward other people or their views will not be tolerated.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Purchase: E. M. Forster, *Maurice* (written in 1917; published in 1971)
 Rita Mae Brown, *Rubyfruit Jungle* (1973)
 Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (2007)
 Kim Fu, *For Today I Am a Boy* (2014)

Rental: Keith Hale (ed.), *Ode to Boy: An Anthology of Same-Sex Attraction in Literature from Antiquity through the First World War* (2013)

Handouts: Selections of stories, poems, and essays distributed throughout the semester.

Please come to class prepared. Read all assigned texts before class and bring the readings to class so we can discuss specific passages. Prepare some responses to my discussion questions or come up with discussion questions of your own. Do not be shy; all contributions are welcome. This long evening class will be much more fun if we are all attentive, engaged, and involved.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Upon the completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Analyze literary and historical representations of LGBTQ individuals and communities
- Explain how gender/sexual identities are changing social and historical constructions
- Examine intersectionality of gender and sexuality with race/ethnicity, religion, class, nationality, and other significant identity categories
- Describe how social and cultural institutions and discourses influence attitudes toward gender and sexual identities, including through literary and media representations

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING POLICY:	% of the course grade
Two Essays	40% (20% per exam)
Two Exams	40% (20% per exam)
Daily Work Grade	20%

ESSAYS:

You will write two short essays (3-4 pages each) in response to one of several suggested topics. Some will be standard topics for literary analysis; others will be more unusual, such as to imagine a dialogue between characters from two different texts, to rewrite a scene from another character's point of view, to write a plausible epilogue for a novel, or two imagine how a character from the past might behave if he/she lived in America today (or vice versa).

All papers should have titles, be double spaced, printed in a standard 12-size font, with one-inch margins, and turned in on time. I will deduct half a letter grade for each day a paper is late.

EXAMS:

The exams are likely to have **in-class and take-home components**. The in-class part will test your factual knowledge of the texts, concepts, and ideas covered in each half of the semester. The take-home part will test your in-depth comprehension of the themes and issues addressed in the readings. You will receive detailed guidelines for each exam two weeks in advance. If you read all assignments and engage in class discussions, you should be able to do well on the exams.

DAILY WORK GRADE:

There will be **frequent in-class assignments** (quizzes, short-response questions, drafts, etc.). You can earn up to 4 points for each assignment, and the best 10 will count for the grade.

A = 37-40 pts	A- = 34-36 pts	B+ = 31-33 pts	B = 28-30 pts	B- = 25-27 pts
C+ = 22-24 pts	C = 19-21 pts	C- = 16-18 pts	D+ = 13-15 pts	D = 10-12 pts

I will award **up to 5 extra points** to those students who consistently contribute to discussions.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

I can excuse only documented absences caused by serious illness or official university business. **There is no penalty for one unexcused absence.** Save it for real needs, whether planned (travel, doctor's appointment, etc.) or unplanned (emergencies, personal issues, not feeling well, etc.).

Additional absences will have an impact on your grades:

- For 2nd unexcused absence, your Daily Work Grade will be lowered one full letter grade.
- For 3rd such absence, your Daily Work Grade will be lowered another full letter grade.
- For 4th such absence, your Course Grade will be lowered one full letter grade.
- For 5th such absence, your Course Grade will be lowered another full letter grade.

No student will pass the course with more than five absences. Students who accumulate three or more absences by mid-semester will be strongly encouraged to drop the course.

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS:

Being a Pointer entails a number of responsibilities and rights of which you should be aware. You should be familiar with the UWSP Dean of Students' web page about student conduct: <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Student-Conduct.aspx>.

Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct are serious violations. Read about academic integrity: <http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/AcademicIntegrityBrochure.pdf>. When unsure whether certain action is appropriate or not, please feel free to talk to me about it.

Freedom from physical or verbal harassment: Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at UWSP, and it is your right and duty to report it. You should be aware of UWSP policies for such incidents (<https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/sexualassault/Pages/victims-bill-of-rights.aspx>) and our Bias/Hate Incident Reporting (<http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Bias-Hate-Incident.aspx>). You can report (anonymously, if preferred) any incidents of interpersonal violence, such as sexual assault, as well as bias/hate incidents, such as blatantly racist or homophobic behavior.

UWSP is committed to providing appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities and temporary impairments. Please do not hesitate to talk to me if you need special arrangements of any kind. If you have a disability or a condition requiring assistance, please contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center on the 6th floor of Albertson Hall (library) as soon as possible. DATC can be reached at 715-346-3365 or DATC@uwsp.edu. For more information, see <http://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/toQualifyForDisabilityServices.aspx>.

UWSP Emergency Procedures: We all hope we'll never need them, but it is wise to be aware of what to do in an emergency: <https://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Documents/em/procedures/UWSP%20Emergency%20Guidebook.pdf>.

Please turn off all electronic devices unless you use them for the sole purpose of taking notes. Texting, emailing, or Web browsing in class is not allowed because it will distract both you and those around you from class activities. You can be sure that I will notice if you engage in these activities in class, and that will adversely affect your Daily Work Grade.

The English Department policy is that **students may not make audio, video, or photographic recordings of lectures or other class activities** without written permission from the instructor.

READING SCHEDULE:

- Jan. 29 E. M. Forster, *Maurice*, Part One
Mary E. Wilkins, "Two Friends" (handout)
- Feb. 5 E. M. Forster, *Maurice*, Part Two
Selections from *Ode to Boy*:
Poems by Solon & Sappho (pp. 22-24)
Biblical story of David & Jonathan (pp. 25-27)
Plato, from *Symposium* (pp. 41-47)
Plutarch, from *Parallel Lives* (pp. 159-60)
- Feb. 12 E. M. Forster, *Maurice*, Part Three
Selections from *Ode to Boy*:
Montaigne, from *Essays on Friendship* (p. 206)
Shakespeare, selected sonnets (pp. 212-15)
Katherine Philips, two poems (pp. 230-32)
Anna Seward, Elegy & three sonnets (pp. 238-40)
- Feb. 19 E. M. Forster, *Maurice*, Part Four
- Feb. 26 **Essay 1 due in class (print-out) and in Canvas**
Selections from *Ode to Boy*:
Gertrude Stein, "Miss Furr and Miss Skeene" (pp. 478-83)
E. M. Forster, "The Story of a Panic" (pp. 493-511)
- Mar. 4 Rita Mae Brown, *Rubyfruit Jungle*, Parts I & II
- Mar. 11 **Midterm Exam (in-class part)**
Rita Mae Brown, *Rubyfruit Jungle*, Parts III & IV
- Mar. 18 No class – Happy Spring Break! Have fun! Be Safe!
- Mar. 25 **Midterm Exam (at-home part) due**
Randall Kenan, "Run, Mourner, Run" (handout)
- Apr. 1 A. M. Homes, "A Real Doll" (handout)
Sarah Schulman, "The Penis Story" (handout)
- Apr. 8 Kim Fu, *For Today I Am a Boy*, Chapters I-V
- Apr. 15 Kim Fu, *For Today I Am a Boy*, Chapters VI-X
- Apr. 22 **Essay 2 due in class (print-out) and in Canvas**
"The Sower" (2017, dir. Marine Francen) – 6 p.m., CPS 116 (followed by Q&A)
- Apr. 29 Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home*
- May 6 Final Exam Workshop & End-of-Semester Celebration

Take-home final exam is due in Canvas at the time of the exam: Friday, May 15, 2:30 p.m.