

# Queer Literary Studies Section 01

## ENGL 184

Spring 2024 4 Unit(s) 01/24/2024 to 05/13/2024 Modified 01/19/2024

### Course Information

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Examination of queerness in literature, history, and culture. Explores queerness as it exists across historical contexts, tracing its manifestations in various literary genres and in other cultural artifacts such as film and television, including the ways gender and sexuality intersect with race, class, and ability, as they relate to identity formation and structures of power.

### Course Description and Requisites

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Examination of queerness in literature, history, and culture. Explores queerness as it exists across historical contexts, tracing its manifestations in various literary genres and in other cultural artifacts such as film and television, including the ways gender and sexuality intersect with race, class, and ability, as they relate to identity formation and structures of power.

Prerequisite(s): Upper division standing.

Letter Graded

### \* Classroom Protocols

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#### Credit Hours Per Unit

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”  
Per University Policy S16-9 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>),

Late Work & Makeup Work:

Every student is allowed to use a two-day extension on a written assignments twice per term with prior notice. All late work (including late makeup work) will have its final grade reduced by 10% for every week that it is late. This penalty can be waived if you reach out to Dr. Rivers and start a conversation about catching up with the course, and completing any uncompleted work. All late work is due to Canvas by 11:59PM (Midnight) on Friday 5/10.

## Program Information

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The following statement has been adopted by the Department of English for inclusion in all syllabi: In English Department Courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs. The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the SJSU Catalog ("The Grading System").

Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance:

- A = excellent;
- B = above average;
- C = average;
- D = below average;
- F = failure.

Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a +(plus) or -(minus) grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

### **Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)**

Upon successful completion of an undergraduate degree program in the Department of English and Comparative Literature, students will be able to:

1. Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, or rhetoric.
2. Show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature.
3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject.
4. Develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively.
5. Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts, including structures of power.

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### **Department Information:**

**Department Name:** English and Comparative Literature

**Department Office:** FO 102

Department Website: [www.sjsu.edu/english](http://www.sjsu.edu/english) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/english>)

Department email: [english@sjsu.edu](mailto:english@sjsu.edu) (<mailto:english@sjsu.edu>)

Department phone number: 408-924-4425

## Course Materials

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### Required Texts/Readings:

James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room*

Gabby Rivera, *Juliet Takes a Breath*

Torrey Peters, *Detransition, Baby*

Anthony Veasna So, *Afterparties*

Carmen Maria Machado, *In the Dream House*

Billy-Ray Belcourt, *A Minor Chorus*

KB Brookins, *Freedom House*

Hamish Steele, *Deadendia Vol 1: The Watcher's Test*

## Course Requirements and Assignments

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### Classroom Participation (30%):

Students in this course are expected to arrive on time with the day's assigned text and their notes, and participate in all discussion and breakout activities. Participation activities cannot be made up in the case of absence. All students are expected to participate in classroom discussions in a curious and respectful manner. In addition to in-class assignments, your participation grade will also include a qualitative, end of term evaluation of your contributions across the term. Expectations for professional participation in a university-level class include: focused attention, appropriate use of technology, respectful communication, and treating our texts and topics with the seriousness they require.

***A Note on Academic Integrity:*** I want to strongly caution you against using AI generated content, other students' work, and/or other external texts (summaries, etc.) as a replacement for your own work in the class. As a member of our learning community, you're signing on to read, take notes, reflect on the complexity of our texts, and articulate your own thoughts and insights in writing. **If you find that you're struggling with an assignment or a text, please reach out to me (and/or to the campus writing center) for help and support.** Don't risk your own grade (and diminish your own integrity) by passing other people's work off as your own.

## In-Class Reading Responses (10%)

In-class response activities start at the beginning of the class day and last around 10 minutes. These informal reading responses will ask you to develop and/or reflect on a question related to the day's reading. Some of these assignments will be reflective, while others will ask you to respond to questions about the book, and develop material to share in small-group discussion.

## Canvas Reading Responses (30%):

Each week, you will be asked to submit a brief reflection and analysis paper that discusses key elements, themes, and/or insights from the week's readings. Your finished Canvas post should be 1.5-3 double-spaced pages in length, and should demonstrate the following: a) that you completed the assigned reading in its entirety, b) that you have taken notes that allow you to locate and discuss key lines, passages, and elements of craft within some depth and specificity and c) that you can reflect on connections between this reading and your developing understanding of queer literary studies.

## Classroom Facilitation (10%):

Each student will sign up to lead class discussion for one day of the term. Students will select their date at the beginning of the term, and they will be in charge of consulting at least 1 research-based external source as they develop a brief presentation on the text (and/or its contexts) on the given class day [See Potential Sources for Facilitation] document on Canvas for ideas about where to start.

Along with identifying key passages and/or questions about the text, the student can bring in media, current events, author biography, discussion activities or cultural contexts that enrich will enrich our discussions of this text. The presentation material should be between 5-10 minutes (including media), and students should submit a short overview of their presentation at least 24 hours before the class they are scheduled to facilitate.

When you are facilitating, I will ask you to extend your Canvas Post by 1 page and respond to the following prompt:

What external source/s did you consult for your facilitation? Please identify the argument or significant insight that arose across your supplemental readings for this week, and select 2-3 quotes that capture this insight and its nuances. Then spend a long paragraph analyzing your quote and discussing how the author develops and nuances their thinking. Are there particular histories, theories, quotes from other scholars, or pieces evidence they use to support and expand their discussion? How does this text help us better understand the day's reading and its contexts?

These posts will be due by 12:00PM (before class) on the day that the corresponding reading is scheduled for discussion

## Connections Project (10%)

At the end of the first unit, you will be asked to complete a connections project that either a) explores one of our texts in greater depth or b) analyzes a theme or connection across multiple texts. More details on this assignment will become available as we approach the end of unit one.

## Final Project: Queer Literary Cultures (10%)

This final project asks you to undertake a critical, creative, or archival engagement with queer literary cultures. You will identify your own topic and develop your project across the final unit of the course. As you do so, I'll ask you to submit a proposal and research summary. Your final project can take the form of a) traditional interpretive analysis paper or b) a creative project.

**If you pursue an analysis paper, your work** should significantly incorporate at least 2 texts from the course (including at least 1 creative and 1 contextual texts). These supplementary texts can range in type, but should include at least 1 research-based source from a peer-reviewed journal, a research organization, or a book published by a University Press. You should also consider consulting our librarian, Peggy Cabrera for support.

**The second option** is a creative project. This project can take the form of a piece of creative writing, or it could be a public humanities project, a comic book, a lesson plan, or some other mode of creative engagement. All projects will need to be proposed beforehand to gain instructor feedback and approval. (Please note: paper collages will not be approved unless the student can demonstrate a substantial engagement with the genre and its contexts.). Finished creative projects will also need a 300-500 word artist's statement that illustrates connections among the project and its research material, as well as some process-reflections on the work of developing and revising/refining the creative project. Though the creative production will comprise the majority of this project, the artist's statement should incorporate at least 1 class text and at least 2 pieces of contextual research the shape your engagement with queer literary cultures

Students pursuing either option will be required to submit a research summary and project outline on Week 14. More details on this project will be distributed during the semester

## Grading Information

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## Grading Breakdown:

Category	Percentage of Total Grade
Classroom Participation	30%
In-Class Responses	10%
Canvas Reading Responses	30%
Classroom Facilitation	10%
Connections Project	10%
Queer Literary Studies Project	10%

## University Policies

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Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

## Course Schedule

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# Class Schedule

*Please Note: This schedule is subject to change in response to external circumstances (such as campus closure, etc.), and/or classroom dynamics.*

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		UNIT 1: Queer Comings of Age

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Wed 1/24	<p>No In-Person Class:</p> <p><b>Viewing Due:</b> Watch the first 35 mins of <i>The Celluloid Closet</i> on the SJSU Library Website and complete the viewing guide.</p> <p><b>Assignments Due:</b> Getting to Know You Activity &amp; Celluloid Closet Viewing Guide Due by 11:59PM on Friday 1/26</p>
2	Mon 1/29	<p><b>Assignment Due:</b> Bring your copy of <i>Giovanni's Room</i> by James Baldwin to class.</p> <p><b>In-Class Activity:</b> Intros and group read of Baldwin</p>
2	Wed 1/31	<p><b>Reading Due:</b> James Baldwin, <i>Giovanni's Room</i> to p. 71</p> <p><b>In-Class Activity:</b> Writing/reflection on <i>Giovanni's Room</i> (please bring your copy)</p>
3	Mon 2/5	<p><b>Reading Due:</b> Finish James Baldwin, <i>Giovanni's Room</i></p> <p><b>Assignment Due:</b> Reading Response 1: <i>Giovanni's Room</i> (Due to Canvas by 12PM/noon)</p>
3	Wed 2/7	<p><b>Reading Due:</b> Audre Lorde, "Coal," "Litany for Survival," &amp; "Poetry is Not a Luxury"</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
4	Mon 2/12	<p><b>Reading Due:</b> Audre Lorde, "Man Child: a Black Lesbian Feminist Response"; "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference" &amp; "The Uses of the Erotic" from <i>Sister Outsider</i> &amp; José Esteban Muñoz, "Queerness" from <i>Cruising Utopia</i></p> <p><b>Assignment Due:</b> Reading Response 2: Audre Lorde (Due to Canvas by 12PM/noon)</p>
4	Wed 2/14	<p><b>Reading Due:</b> Gabby Rivera, <i>Juliet Takes a Breath</i> to p. 63</p>
5	Mon 2/19	<p><b>Reading Due:</b> Gabby Rivera, <i>Juliet Takes a Breath</i> to p. 213</p> <p>[Last Day to Drop Without a "W"]</p>
5	Wed 2/21	<p><b>Reading Due:</b> Finish Gabby Rivera, <i>Juliet Takes a Breath</i></p> <p><b>Assignment Due:</b> Reading Response 3: <i>Juliet Takes a Breath</i> (Due to Canvas by 12PM/noon)</p>
6 =	Mon 2/26	<p><b>Reading Due:</b> Raquel Gutiérrez, "On Making Butch Family: an Intertextual Dialogue" &amp; "Butch in the Desert," from <i>Brown Neon</i></p> <p><b>In-Class Activity:</b> Discuss selections from <i>Brown Neon</i></p>
6	Wed 2/28	<p><b>In-Class Activity:</b> Introduce Connections Project &amp; Watch <i>Sort Of</i></p>



<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
7	Mon 3/4	<b>Reading Due:</b> Torrey Peters, <i>Detransition, Baby</i>
7	Wed 3/6	<b>Reading Due:</b> Torrey Peters, <i>Detransition, Baby</i>  <b>Assignment Due:</b> Reading Response 4: <i>Detransition, Baby</i> (Due to Canvas by 12PM/noon)
8	Mon 3/11	<b>Reading Due:</b> Torrey Peters, <i>Detransition, Baby</i>
8	Wed 3/13	<b>In-Class Activity:</b> Torrey Peters, <i>Detransition, Baby</i>
9	Mon 3/18	<b>Reading Due:</b> Finish Torrey Peters, <i>Detransition, Baby</i>  <b>Assignment Due:</b> Reading Response 5: <i>Detransition, Baby</i> (Due to Canvas by 12PM/noon)
9	Wed 3/20	<b>No Reading Due</b>  <b>In-Class Activity:</b> Check in on Connections Project  <b>Assignment Due:</b> Connections Project Due by 11:59PM on Friday 3/15
10	Mon 3/25	<b>Reading Due:</b> Anthony Veasna So, <i>Afterparties</i>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
10	Wed 3/27	<p><b>In-Class Activity:</b> Finish Anthony Veasna So, <i>Afterparties</i></p> <p><b>Assignment Due:</b> Reading Response 6: <i>Afterparties</i>, (Due to Canvas by 12PM/noon)</p>
		<p><b>Spring Break! No Class Meetings</b></p>
11	Mon 4/8	<p><b>Reading Due:</b> Carmen Maria Machado, <i>In the Dream House</i></p>
11	Wed 4/10	<p><b>Reading Due: Reading Due:</b> Carmen Maria Machado, <i>In the Dream House</i></p>
12	Mon 4/15	<p><b>Reading Due: Reading Due:</b> Finish Carmen Maria Machado, <i>In the Dream House</i></p> <p><b>In-Class Activity:</b></p> <p><b>Assignment Due:</b> Reading Response 7: <i>In the Dream House</i>, (Due to Canvas by 12PM/noon)</p>
12	Wed 4/17	<p><b>Reading Due:</b> Leanna Betasamosake Simpson, "Indigenous Queer Normativity" from <i>As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance</i> &amp; Natalie Diaz, selections from <i>Postcolonial Love Poem</i></p> <p><b>In-Class Activity:</b> Discuss Final Project</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
13	Mon 4/22	Reading Due: Billy-Ray Belcourt, <i>A Minor Chorus</i>
13	Wed 4/24	Reading Due: Billy-Ray Belcourt, <i>A Minor Chorus</i>  Assignments Due: Reading Response 8: <i>A Minor Chorus</i> (Due to Canvas by 12PM/noon)
14	Mon 4/29	Reading Due: KB Brookins, <i>Freedom House</i>
14	Wed 5/1	In-Class Activity: Final Project Check in  Assignment Due: Reading Response 9: <i>Freedom House</i> (Due to Canvas by 12PM/noon)
15	Mon 5/6	Reading Due: Hamish Steele, <i>Deadendia Vol 1: The Watcher's Test</i>

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
15	Wed 5/8	<b>In-Class Activity:</b> Semester Review Discussion  <b>Assignment Due:</b> All Late Work Due to Canvas by 11:59PM on Friday 5/10
16	Mon 5/13	<b>In-Class Activity:</b> Final Project Presentations
17	Wed 5/15	<b>Finals Period:</b> Final Project Due by 11:59PM