

FIS 497 GENRE STUDIES: QUEER CINEMA

"These names: gay, queer, homosexual are limiting. I would love to finish with them. We're going to have to decide which terms to use and where we use them. For me to use the word 'queer' is a liberation; it was a word that frightened me, but no longer."

—Derek Jarman

"We're here. We're queer. Get used to it."

—Queer Nation

GENRE STUDIES: QUEER CINEMA is an overview of cinema of LGBT+ peoples. Queer cinema's commonly cited storytelling structures and filmic techniques will be explored, as well as its historical development within queer culture and history, its changing philosophies about queer representation, and its relationship to mainstream film industries, with special emphasis on major film authors and their influences. Films explored are those about, created by, and/or embraced by members of queer communities.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Develop and apply a range of definitions of “queer cinema”
- Communicate oft-cited commonalities in queer cinema
- Identify major creators of queer cinema and their influences
- Analyze queer films to pinpoint their influence on other works
- Apply their research and insight in class discussions
- Synthesize their knowledge in written presentations

READINGS:

There will be no assigned text book for the class, though selected reading assignments may be sent to students on a week-by-week basis.

GRADES:

Grades will consist of Daily Attendance & Participation in class discussions, Weekly Discussion Prep of 400 words each, one 2,000-word Research Paper on a queer film or TV show of the student’s choice, a Midterm Exam, and a Final Exam.

All told, 1000 points are possible in the course.

300 points DAILY ATTENDANCE & MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION
300 points WEEKLY JOURNAL ENTRIES
200 points FREE TOPIC RESEARCH PAPER
100 points MIDTERM EXAM
100 points FINAL EXAM

100-90%: A, 89-80%: B, 79-70%: C, 69-60: D, 59 and below: F

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance and participation, being essential to the success of the class entire, are mandatory; therefore, attendance and tardiness will be monitored at the beginning and end of each class. Film department policy states that any student with three unexcused absences will result in the dropping of a full letter grade. Four unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.

Attendance and civil participation is not only the most essential aspect of the course for an individual student, it also aids in the educational experience of the entire class. Therefore, attendance and tardiness will be monitored at the beginning and end of each class. Late arrivals (after roll is called) or before the class is dismissed will each result in a 50% deduction of attendance points for the day.

Should a student miss class, it is their responsibility to view any films shown by the following class meeting. Missing the free screenings held during class time may cause the student to pay out of pocket to rent or screen films. It is not the instructor's responsibility to find free or inexpensive options for makeup screenings. The cheapest option is to attend class.

Every feature film shown is available at local media stores, UNLV's Lied Library and Kanopy online, Clark County Library District, through websites that rent or sell DVDs, or streaming video. Some short films and excerpted features are difficult to find, often obtained at great expense. Again, attendance is key.

The instructor will not provide students with copies of screened films or lecture notes. Make-up notes should be obtained from a reliable fellow student. It's recommended that students meet each other early on.

Generally, a student missing class because of observance of a religious holiday will have the opportunity to make up missed work. Students must notify the instructor of anticipated absences by the last day of late registration.

Students who represent UNLV at official extracurricular activities will also have the opportunity to make up assignments, but the student must provide official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed classes.

WEEKLY DISCUSSION PREP:

For each film screening, students will be given a prompt to address in a minimum 400-word, double-spaced, Discussion Prep to be uploaded to WebCampus by the following week. Each Discussion Prep is worth 25 points each for a total of 250 points (25% of the total grade).

Although there will be a prompt for each film screening, students are only responsible for 10 regular Discussion Preps from the 13 total prompts, as well as a mandatory Discussion Prep on a homework screenings (CIRCUMSTANCE) and another on attending the ClexaCon convention, admission to which will be provided to the students. Completing more than the required amount will result in 10 extra-credit points, for a total of 30.

Discussion Prep should be used to explore possible avenues of analysis, help keep the film's key details and shots fresh in the student's memory, and start preparation for a fruitful class discussion.

A Discussion Prep will be scored as a Minus (half score) if: the student doesn't meet the 400 word count minimum, fails to include the word count on their paper, doesn't address the prompt given, has too many spelling/grammar issues to be readable, or recaps What Happens rather than How It Happens or How It Can Be Interpreted.

If a student is absent, they shall still upload their work to WebCampus.
No late Discussion Preps will be accepted, except in the case of excused absences.

FREE TOPIC RESEARCH PAPER:

Students will write a 2,000 word Research Paper on a previously unseen feature film or TV season not screened in their entirety in class. Students are free to address any feature film or TV show on a topic of their choice, as long as the student can justify it as queer cinema (made about queer people, made by queer authors, or embraced by queer audiences), through consultation with the instructor.

By Week 6, Monday, February 24, students will turn in an abstract proposing their outside viewing and the topic of their paper.

By Week 11, Monday, March 30 students will turn in a first draft of their paper, around 1500 words, with a works cited page. This does not need to be a polished draft and may be missing citations.

By Week 17, Monday, May 11, students will turn in a final draft of their paper, complete with revisions, citations, and a works cited page.

Students are highly encouraged to turn in their papers before these dates.

MIDTERM & FINAL EXAMS:

At Week 8, Monday, March 9, the Midterm Exam will be given, consisting of 100 multiple choice questions, over 45 minutes, for a total of 100 points (10% of the total grade).

At Week 16, Monday, May 4, the Final Exam will be given, consisting of 100 multiple choice questions, over 45 minutes, for a total of 100 points (10% of the total grade).

The bulk of the exams will be on the factual details from the films screened in their entirety during the course. This will include names of directors, writers, producers, designers, actors, and other filmmakers who have been covered in the introduction to the film screenings or in the ensuing discussions. They will also include key details from the films (character names, plot points, key props and locations, lines of dialogue, song titles, etc.) to exercise the student's recall abilities.

The exams will also cover vocabulary terms and other concepts that may be tested on under the rather limited confines of multiple choice questions.

CLASS NOTES:

As a film major you will be presented with opportunities to work in the production of film projects (your own, other students' or faculty's, and even professional projects shooting in town). You are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to practice and hone your art and craft but not at the expense of your work in this or any other class. Participation in any production is NOT an excuse for failing to complete any and all responsibilities established in this course.

Reading or listening to synopses of cinematic material is not a substitute for screening the material personally and in their entirety. In addition to the examples of Academic Dishonesty given below, discussing or writing about films, videos, and television programs you have not personally seen in their entirety as if you have done so, in order to fulfill the requirements of the class for a grade, constitute Academic Dishonesty and are grounds for failure in the course.

Unless arrangements have been made with the instructor or through the Disabilities Resource Center, photography of the board or audio recording of the lecture in lieu of taking notes is strictly forbidden.

Taking notes during the screenings is not recommended, though written or oral recording of observations and impressions directly after screenings is highly recommended.

Please note that our classroom is neither a movie theater nor a home theater, so special care must be taken to be respectful of others' experience during screenings. All electronic devices should be silenced and left unchecked during screenings, to eliminate noise and light pollution. Similarly, talking during screenings is forbidden, though other beneficial audience noises like laughter, gasps, and crying are encouraged. Excessive exiting and reentering of the classroom during screenings is discouraged, as students should use designated class break times for restroom visits.

Guests are always welcome in class and for screenings as long as they abide by class rules.

Rehearsals and/or Screen Performances

UNLV FILM is committed to creating an inclusive and respectful environment for all students. **Whenever physical contact of any kind between performers is anticipated**, individuals coordinating the shoot or rehearsal (directors, instructors, etc.) should outline the nature and rationale of the planned contact, ensure that participants are comfortable with the actions that will occur, and provide alternatives if requested.

Screening Content

Some of the screenings included in this course may contain sexually explicit, violent, and/ or disturbing material, all of which will be discussed in an intellectually responsible manner. Such material will be flagged in advance of individual screenings, and alternative assignments will be provided for students who request them.

Online resources such as at imdb.com are available to help identify specific content in films while minimizing spoilers.

Historically, queer cinema was frequently transgressive and designed to be purposefully offensive to mainstream values. As with many cinemas of representation, many historically important and influential queer films were made through philosophies and ideas about representation that are controversial and even harmful today.

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the Campus community; we all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, and are encouraged to always take the ethical path whenever faced with choices. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's educational mission. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another person, from the Internet or any other source without proper citation of the sources. See the [Student Conduct Code](https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct), <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

Auditing Classes

Auditing a course allows a student to continue attending the lectures and/or laboratories and discussion sessions associated with the course, but the student will not earn a grade for any component of the course. Students who audit a course receive the same educational experience as students taking the course for a grade, but will be excused from exams, assessments, and other evaluative measures that serve the primary purpose of assigning a grade.

Classroom Conduct

Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn or of instructors to teach. Use of electronic devices such as pagers, cellular phones, or recording devices, or potentially disruptive devices or activities, are only permitted with the prior explicit consent of the instructor. The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative drop of the student from the course.

Copyright

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with, and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you, nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional [copyright policy information](http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright) is available at <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The [UNLV Disability Resource Center](https://www.unlv.edu/drc) (SSC-A, Room 143, <https://www.unlv.edu/drc>, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. Students who believe that they may need academic accommodations due to injury, disability, or due to pregnancy should contact the DRC as early as possible in the academic term. A Disabilities Specialist will discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours, so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

Final Examinations

The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur on the date and at the time specified in the Final Exam schedule. The general schedule is typically available at the start of the semester, and the classroom locations are available approximately one month before the end of the semester. See the [Final Exam Schedule](https://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars), <https://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

Identity Verification in Online Courses

All UNLV students must use their Campus-issued ACE ID and password to log in to WebCampus.

UNLV students enrolled in online or hybrid courses are expected to read and adhere to the [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy), <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy>, which defines, “acting or attempting to act as a substitute for another, or using or attempting to use a substitute, in any academic evaluation or assignment” as a form of academic misconduct. Intentionally sharing ACE login credentials with another person may be considered an attempt to use a substitute and could result in investigation and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

UNLV students enrolled in online courses are also expected to read and adhere to the [Acceptable Use of Computing and Information Technology Resources Policy](https://www.it.unlv.edu/policies/acceptable-use-computing-and-information-technology-resources-policy), <https://www.it.unlv.edu/policies/acceptable-use-computing-and-information-technology-resources-policy>, which prohibits sharing university accounts with other persons without authorization.

To the greatest extent possible, all graded assignments and assessments in UNLV online courses should be hosted in WebCampus or another UNLV-managed platform that requires ACE login credentials for access.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of “I” (Incomplete) may be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session, but cannot complete the last part of the course for reason(s) beyond the student’s control and acceptable to the instructor, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. For undergraduate courses, the incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the period indicated, a grade of “F” will be recorded, and the student’s GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete grade do not register for the course, but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the “I” grade.

Library Resources

Librarians are available to consult with students on research needs, including developing research topics, finding information, and evaluating sources. To make an appointment with a subject expert for this class, please visit the [Libraries’ Research Consultation](http://guides.library.unlv.edu/appointments/librarian) website: <http://guides.library.unlv.edu/appointments/librarian>. You can also [ask the library staff](http://ask.library.unlv.edu/) questions via chat and text message at: <http://ask.library.unlv.edu/>.

Missed Classwork

Any student missing class, quizzes, examinations, or any other class or laboratory work because of observance of religious holidays will be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed work. The make-up opportunity will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for Fall and Spring courses (except for modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for Summer and modular courses, of their intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit the Policy for Missed Work, under Registration Policies, on the [Academic Policies](https://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531) webpage, <https://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

In accordance with the policy approved by the Faculty Senate regarding missed class time and assignments, students who represent UNLV in any official extracurricular activity will also have the opportunity to make up assignments, provided that the student provides official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).

The spirit and intent of the policy for missed classwork is to offer fair and equitable assessment opportunities to all students, including those representing the University in extracurricular activities. Instructors should consider, for example, that in courses which offer a “Drop one” option for the lowest assignment, quiz, or exam, assigning the student a grade of zero for an excused absence for extracurricular activity is both contrary to the intent of the Faculty Senate’s policy, and an infringement on the student’s right to complete all work for the course.

This policy will not apply in the event that completing the assignment or administering the examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the University that could reasonably have been avoided. There should be a good faith effort by both the instructor and the student to agree to a reasonable resolution. When disagreements regarding this policy arise, decisions can be appealed to the Department Chair/Unit Director, College/School Dean, and/or the Faculty Senate Academic Standards Committee.

For purposes of definition, extracurricular activities may include, but are not limited to: fine arts activities, competitive intercollegiate athletics, science and engineering competitions, liberal arts competitions, academic recruitment activities, and any other event or activity sanctioned by a College/School Dean, and/or by the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Rebelmail

Rebelmail is UNLV’s official email system for students, and by University policy, instructors and staff should only send emails to students’ Rebelmail accounts. Rebelmail is one of the primary ways students receive official University communications, information about deadlines, major Campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the University. Emailing within WebCampus is also acceptable.

Tutoring and Coaching

The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching, and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, please visit the [ASC website](https://www.unlv.edu/asc), <https://www.unlv.edu/asc>, or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A, Room 254. Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library, and on the second floor of the College of Engineering building (TBE A 207).

UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the [Writing Center](https://writingcenter.unlv.edu/), <https://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>, located in the Central Desert Complex, Building 3, Room 301 (CDC 3–301). Walk-in consultations are sometimes available, but students with appointments receive priority assistance. Students may make appointments in person or by calling the Center, 702-895-3908. Students are requested to bring to their appointments their Rebel ID Card, a copy of the instructions for their assignment, and two copies of any writing they have completed on their assignment.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Due to our course's experimental nature, our schedule may change.

WEEK 1 Monday, January 20

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY
No Class

WEEK 2 Monday, January 27

Introductions & Syllabus

THE HOURS (2002) Paramount 114m
Directed by Stephen Daldry

WEEK 3 Monday, February 3

ELLEN
"The Puppy Episode" (1994) ABC 45m
Created by Neal Marlens, Carol Black, David S. Rosenthal
&
PARIS IS BURNING (1990) Miramax 78m
Directed by Jennie Livingston

WEEK 4 Monday, February 10

"Scorpio Rising" (1964) 28m
Kenneth Anger
&
THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN (1935) Universal 75m
Directed by James Whale

WEEK 5 Monday, February 17

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY HOLIDAY
No Class

WEEK 6 Monday, February 24

Due: Research Paper Abstract (Approximately One Page)

A STAR IS BORN (1954) Warner Bros. 176m
Directed by George Cukor

WEEK 7 Monday, March 2

SPECIAL GUEST: Filmmaker Stephanie Rothman

GROUP MARRIAGE (1973) 85m
Directed by Stephanie Rothman

WEEK 8 Monday, March 9

MIDTERM EXAM

FELLINI SATYRICON (1969) Produzioni Europee Associati 129m
Directed by Federico Fellini

WEEK 9 Monday, March 16

SPRING BREAK
No Class

WEEK 10 Monday, March 23

"Hold Me While I'm Naked" (1966) 17m
Directed by George Kuchar
&
PINK FLAMINGOS (1972) 92m
Directed by John Waters

WEEK 11 Monday, March 30

Due: Research Paper First Draft
(1,500 words, with works cited page)

"Blow Job" (1964) 35m
Directed by Andy Warhol
&
MALA NOCHE (1991) 78m
Directed by Gus van Sant

Tuesday March 31

Wegner Scholarship Essays Due

WEEK 12 Monday, April 6

Discussion of At-Home Screening:
CIRCUMSTANCE (2011) Maryam Keshavarz 108m
Directed by Neil Blomkamp

BOUND (1996) Gramercy 108m
Directed by Lana & Lilly Wachowski

WEEK 13 Monday, April 13

FAREWELL, MY CONCUBINE (1994) Beijing Film Studio 171m
Directed by Chen Kaige

Thursday, April 16 through Sunday, April 19

ClexaCon

WEEK 14 Monday, April 20

Due: Discussion of ClexaCon

PHILADELPHIA (1993) TriStar 126m
Directed by Jonathan Demme

WEEK 15 Monday, April 27

TROPICAL MALADY (2004) 125m
Directed by Apichatpong Weerasethakul

Friday, May 1 & Saturday, May 2

SPRING FLICKS
Approximately 7pm

WEEK 16 Monday, May 4

Due: Research Paper Final Draft
(2,000 words, with citations and works cited page)

"In a Heartbeat" (2017) 4m
Directed by Estaban Bravo, Beth David
&
THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT (2010) Focus 107m
Directed by Lisa Cholodenko

UNLV FILM HONORS CELEBRATION
Student Union Cohen Theater
Approximately 7pm

WEEK 17 Monday, May 11

FINAL EXAM/POTLUCK
6:00pm-8:00pm

WEEK 18 Tuesday, May 18

Grades due to the Registrar by 4:00pm