# Queer Studies (Concentration)

## Program Guidelines and Goals

An evolving and expanding discipline, Queer Studies encompasses theories and thinkers from many fields: cultural studies, gay and lesbian studies, transgender studies, race studies, women's and gender studies, literature, history, film, media, postmodernism, post-colonialism, and more. By engaging with this diverse range of fields, the work of Queer Studies distinguishes itself in that it focuses on issues surrounding sexuality and gender (and other axes of marginalized identity) and the way(s) that the questions raised in these other arenas might be modulated through that central lens. To that end, Queer Studies examines the cultural, social, historical, and political implications of sexuality and gender from the perspective of those marginalized by the dominant sexual and gender ethos; it explores the ways that culture defines and regulates sexuality and gender (and more broadly normativity) as well as the reverse, the ways that sexuality and gender structure and shape social institutions and power structures.

## Faculty

Committee: Sandy Runzo, Director (English), Ronald Abram (Studio Art), Gina Dow (Psychology), Barbara Fultner (Philosophy), Karen Graves (Education), Amanda Gunn (Communication), Warren Hauk (Biography), Sarah Hutson-Comoex (Psychology), Ching-chu Hu (Music), John Jackson (Black Studies), Clare Jen (Women's and Gender Studies/Biology), Bill Kirkpatrick (Communication), Maia Lipton (Religion), Linda Krumholz (English), Lisbeth Lipari (Communication), May Mei (Mathematics), Lisa McDonnell (English), Michael Morris (Dance), Emily Nemeth (Education), K. Christine Pae (Religion), Heather Pool (Political Science), Fred Porcheddu-Engel (English), Frank "Trey" Proctor (History), Charles St-Georges (Spanish), Sheilah Wilson Restack (Studio Art), David Woodward (Religion), Gill Wright Miller (Dance)

View faculty profiles and contact information (https://denison.edu/academics/queer-studies/contacts)

## Queer Studies Concentration

The Queer Studies concentration requires a total of six courses. Three of these are core requirements, and three are electives that typically are offered by other programs or departments and are cross-listed with Queer Studies.

### Core Requirements

The required core courses are:

- QS 101 - Introduction to Queer Studies
- QS 227 - Queer Theory
- QS 400 - Senior Seminar

### Electives

The Queer Studies concentration requires students to complete three elective courses from among those approved by the Queer Studies Committee based on the following criteria, or through petition to the Committee:

At least two-thirds of the course should focus on: some aspect of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender experience, culture, and history; and/or relevant issues or themes (privilege, oppression, sexual behavior, identity, performance, social movements, etc.); and/or conceptual categories (gender, sexuality, etc.) central to the field of Queer Studies.

Any course in the concentration should address the relationship between the normative and the transgressive. Through these courses students should gain an understanding of, and respect for, differences in human identity such as age, ability, class, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexuality, race, and religion. Courses that already meet the criteria for Queer Studies electives, or that can be readily adapted to meet the above criteria through negotiations between instructor and student, include (but are not limited to) the following:

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<tr>
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<td>WGST 323</td>
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## Courses

**QS 101 - Introduction to Queer Studies (4 Credit Hours)**

A survey of the legal regulation of sexuality and gender in the 19th and 20th centuries and the emergence of modern civil rights movements of sexual minorities. This course will focus on the history, strategies, conflicts, and issues associated with these political and social movements.

**QS 108 - Bible, Gender and Sexuality (4 Credit Hours)**

This course introduces students to the many conflicted attitudes and images around men, women, and sexuality found in the Bible, from the very different creations of Adam and Eve to Revelation's representation of the Roman Empire as the "whore" of Babylon; from the assertive and sexually suspicious female figures of Ruth and Rahab to Jesus’ uncertain masculinity in accounts of his death. We will ask: does the Bible support heterosexuality and decry homosexuality? In addition to close, historically-oriented study of select biblical texts, students will be acquainted with core readings in contemporary gender theory.

**QS 199 - Introductory Topics in Queer Studies (1-4 Credit Hours)**

A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.
QS 213 - Queer Graphix (4 Credit Hours)
Through a series of drawing and printmaking projects, this studio art course seeks to explore and creatively express queer culture, aesthetics and GLBT art history, as well as notions of identity, gender, orientation and sexuality. Art students will employ traditions of journalistic comics, collage, screen-printing, photo-copies, community collaborative artistic work (zines) and research presentation projects to not only celebrate queer artistic practices but also reveal the often damaging impact society and politics has on self identity and expression.

QS 227 - Queer Theory (4 Credit Hours)
Queer Theory is an interdisciplinary course designed to introduce students to historical and theoretical treatments of topics such as the essentialism vs. constructionism debate; intersections of race/gender/class and sexual orientation; science and representation; performativity and normativity; and ethics, politics, and law. At some point in the past it was cross-listed with WGST 379, but recent iterations have not been cross-listed, and currently we have no plans to cross-list the course.

QS 229 - Mediating Gender and Sexuality (4 Credit Hours)
In this class we will examine and evaluate the cultural construction and representation of gender and sexuality in contemporary American mass media, and trace their development throughout the 20th century. We will focus on a variety of mass-produced commercial media texts, surveying television, magazines, advertising, and popular music. Although gender is the primary identity construction examined in the course, we will also pay close attention to other aspects of identity that define American women, such as ethnicity, class, and sexuality. We will investigate representational issues in relation to their political repercussion, and draw from a broad range of academic literature, including feminist television criticism, film theory, cultural studies, communication theory, and popular music criticism.

Crosslisting: COMM 229.

QS 235 - Introduction to Black Studies (4 Credit Hours)
An introductory study of the Black experience in America, this course will survey the field by examining in series, the various social institutions that comprise Black American life. Students will be introduced to fundamental contemporary issues in the study of Black religion, politics, economics and the family. Additionally, this course will serve as an introduction to Afrocentricity, "the emerging paradigm in Black Studies," and to the new scholarship on Blacks in America.

QS 238 - Queer Night (1 Credit Hour)
This course explores issues in Queer Studies through weekly discussions, often but not exclusively centered around fiction and documentary films selected and screened by faculty and students, as well as readings and other materials to provoke thought and discussion. One of the purposes of this course is to provide students a venue in which to discuss the meanings of sex, gender identity, gender performance, gender roles, and sexual orientation—both in their relationships to each other and their intersections with race, ethnicity, class, religion, culture, and location. Such relationships are central to the themes of the topics course materials selected each semester. The course further seeks to bring a diverse group of faculty and staff together with students to engage in conversation and to learn collaboratively about concepts and themes in Queer Studies. Students may enroll in Queer Night multiple times since the films screened and materials assigned will be different each semester.

QS 240 - Special Topics in Dance (4 Credit Hours)
This is a special topics course originating in the Dance Department. This course provides a venue in which to explore topics in Dance that meet the requirements of an elective course in the Queer Studies Concentration. Topics will vary according to the needs and interests of the teaching faculty offering the course. In some cases, this course may be repeated for credit.

QS 250 - Special Topics in Literature (4 Credit Hours)
This is a special topics course originating in the English Department. This course provides a venue in which to explore topics in English that meet the requirements of an elective course in the Queer Studies Concentration. Topics will vary according to the needs and interests of the teaching faculty offering the course. In some cases, this course may be repeated for credit.

QS 268 - Topics in Queer Studies (4 Credit Hours)

QS 275 - Philosophy of Feminism (4 Credit Hours)
Feminism can radically challenge traditional ways of doing philosophy. In asking why women and women's experience seem to be missing from the tradition of philosophy, it implicitly questions philosophy's claim to objectivity, universality, and truth. Thus, feminist criticism probes some of the most fundamental philosophical assumptions about our knowledge of and interaction with the world and other people. Are there philosophically significant differences between men and women? This course examines this and other questions, emphasizing contemporary feminist discussions of epistemology, ethics, and science.

Prerequisite(s): One previous course in Philosophy or Women's and Gender Studies or consent.

QS 280 - Special Topics in Religion (4 Credit Hours)
This is a special topics course originating in the Religion Department. This course provides a venue in which to explore topics in Religion that meet the requirements of an elective course in the Queer Studies Concentration. Topics will vary according to the needs and interests of the teaching faculty offering the course. In some cases, this course may be repeated for credit.

QS 281 - Introduction to Theology (4 Credit Hours)
Theology can be understood as a quarrel with normality. With a transcending disposition, it challenges the ideologies of the age with an alternative consciousness. Issues of race, gender, sexual orientation, environmental deterioration, and the death penalty are confronted. Metaphors for God penetrate and deconstruct.

QS 290 - Issues in Feminism (4 Credit Hours)
An introduction to the field of Women's and Gender Studies, this interdisciplinary course considers the socio-political meanings and practices of gender in our lives. It examines whether gender is biological or socially constructed and how notions of femininity and masculinity are (re)produced. Students will analyze the workings of power and the social production of inequality in institutions such as the family, the workplace, and the state, taking into account the intersections between gender, race, class, ethnicity, nationality, and sexuality. Topics will include sexual and gender violence, equal rights, reproductive technologies, body image, and transnational feminist issues. A central aim of the course is to develop critical reading and thinking about the plurality of women's experiences and about the ways in which women have resisted inequalities and engaged in local/global politics for social transformation and change. This course fulfills the Interdivisional (I), Power and Justice (P), and Oral Communication (R) GE requirement.
QS 301 - Seminar: Psychology of Women (4 Credit Hours)
This course reviews psychological research and theories on women. Topics include sex bias in psychological research, gender differences and similarities in personality and abilities, lifespan development, problems of adjustment and psychotherapy, language and communication, women's health, female sexuality, and violence against women (rape and wife battering).
Prerequisite(s): PSYC 100, PSYC 200, and junior or senior status, or consent of instructor.

QS 311 - Feminist Theory (4 Credit Hours)
This course examines various ways of understanding gender by looking at a variety of feminist theories. Theories studied may include psychoanalytic, feminist theory, cultural materialist feminist theory, etc. Particular consideration will be given to issues raised by multiculturalism, women of color, womanist perspectives, queer theory, class concerns, international and transnational movements. The course will introduce students to a variety of theories to enable them both to recognize and use those theories in their research and social practice. Students will be encouraged to become reflective about their own theoretical stances and to consider how societies can move closer to justice for both women and men.
Prerequisite(s): One Women's and Gender Studies course or consent.

QS 323 - Transgender Studies/Transgender Issues (4 Credit Hours)
This course offers an introduction to the growing interdisciplinary field of Transgender Studies, focusing on key figures and writings that contributed to its development. Transgender Studies is primarily concerned with directing critical concentration on the diversity and politics of gender, the embodied experience of transgender people, as well as the material conditions and representational strategies that surround, enable, and constrain trans* lives. We will consider relevant selections of scholarship in feminist, queer, and transgender studies; first-person and autobiographical writings by transgender people; and media representations of transgender people and politics that are shaping perspectives of gender within our contemporary cultural moment. Transgender scholarship and perspectives made available by transgender lives provide opportunities to consider and critique the range of apparatuses and systems of regulations that produce the limits and frontiers of embodying sex and gender.

QS 329 - Gender and Communication (4 Credit Hours)
This course focuses on (1) the role of interpersonal, social and political communication in the construction of gender expectations in American culture, and (2) how those expectations get communicated/performed, and thus reified, in our daily lives. We will explore the complex interplay between self expectations and social expectations of gender that get expressed, challenged, and ultimately influenced by and within a variety of social and interpersonal contexts: education, the body, organizations, friends and family, romantic relationships, the media, and politics.
Prerequisite(s): COMM 280 and COMM 290.

QS 330 - Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education (4 Credit Hours)
In this seminar students will examine gay and lesbian issues in what is, arguably, the most central social institution in contemporary American culture. We will begin with an introduction to sexuality, drawing upon scientific and historical scholarship, and collectively delineate critical issues regarding sexuality in U.S. schools. We will study Queer Theory as a foundation for the work to follow and read central texts in the queer history of education. We will read major legal documents regarding sexuality in the United States and secondary literature relating to them. In this section our focus will be on students’ rights regarding Gay Straight Alliances, safety, and educators’ employment rights. We will discuss gay and lesbian issues in a multicultural education framework in terms of issues identified by the class earlier in the semester.

QS 332 - Music and Sexuality (4 Credit Hours)

QS 340 - Social Movements (4 Credit Hours)
In this course we explore social movements as a primary means of social change. We attempt to understand the conditions which precede, accompany and follow collective action. Particular case studies for analysis will be drawn from the United States and cross-cultural contexts to illustrate that social movements are human products that have both intended and unintended consequences. This course is sometimes taught with a special subtitle: “Social Justice Movements in Communities of Color”.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 or consent.
Crosslisting: BLST 340.

QS 349 - The Trouble with Normal: Normalization, Discourse and Power (4 Credit Hours)
One of the primary ways that social power and control are exercised is through the establishment and enforcement of “norms”: gender norms, racial norms, sexuality norms, norms of able-bodiedness, norms of beauty and body size, and more. This course delves deeply into the theoretical literature of normalization, especially the work of Michel Foucault, and applies it to a wide range of topics including sexuality, disability, gender roles, body size, and more.
Prerequisite(s): COMM 280 and COMM 290, or QS 101 and QS 201, or QS 300, or consent of instructor.
Crosslisting: COMM 349.

QS 350 - Special Topics Literature (4 Credit Hours)
This is a special topics course originating in the English Department. This course provides a venue in which to explore topics in English that meet the requirements of an elective course in the Queer Studies Concentration. Topics will vary according to the needs and interests of the teaching faculty offering the course. In some cases, this course may be repeated for credit.

QS 351 - Contemporary Drama (4 Credit Hours)
Intensive study of drama from 1956 to the present, with an emphasis on British and American playwrights. The course will focus on the issues, problems, techniques, and generic forms particular to contemporary drama, with interest in the emerging drama of minority, female, and gay and lesbian playwrights.
Crosslisting: ENGL 340.
QS 361 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)
QS 362 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)
QS 363 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)
QS 364 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

QS 400 - Senior Seminar (4 Credit Hours)
This is a capstone course for the QS concentration during the spring semester, when it may also serve to help students apply Queer Theory to a senior project or honors project in their chosen major.

QS 402 - Language, Identity and Politics: Discourse and the Public Sphere (4 Credit Hours)
This course examines the role of language and discourse in constructing, maintaining and transforming identities, publics and politics in late 20th century democracies. Throughout, we will consider the relationship between language use and unequal relations of power. We will begin with an introduction to discourse studies and explore discourse as symbolic power, social practice and ideology. Next, we will examine the role of discourse in constructing and maintaining identities and communities, including those of subaltern and marginalized publics. Finally, we will examine and critique the role of discourse in public sphere(s) from Afrocentric, feminist and queer perspectives.

QS 406 - Rhetoric and Social Movements (4 Credit Hours)
This course focuses on the historical rhetorics of discontent and transformation. Students will examine the characteristics and functions of persuasive discourse produced by social movements; the ways in which symbolic action sought to shape perceptions of concrete realities. Of particular interest will be the intersection of cultural context, biography, and creative rhetorical strategy.

QS 451 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)
QS 452 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)