ENG 316 Fall 2020

crn: 12481 Queer Versatility Quinn Miller

Zoom Classes: Tues and Thurs, 2:15-3:45pm (Pacific Time)

Contact Quinn: Canvas message; or email qmmiller@uoregon.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9am - noon and also by request

Course Work:

3 writing exercises (choose from many options) - 30 points total

Short essay (choose from three options) - 20 points

Self-designed project - 30 points

Project proposal (written or live pitch) - 10 points

Wrap-up (self-evaluation, attendance report, exercise 4) - 10 points

+ other available options

Learning Objectives

1) Practice versatility with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of the limits of conventions 2) use cultural and historical information to situate texts within various competing contexts 3) analyze formal versatility 4) be versatile with respect to institutional discourse and cis gendering norms, including through versatility around and beyond the category of women writers.
* This course explores the versatility of formal conventions and constraints in queer contexts. Versatility indicates adjustment, an ability to switch from one thing to its presumed opposite and back. The versatility of many women writers shows how slippery and unstable—how consistently inconsistent—form can be. Versatility, a marker of queer cultural production across time, creates excess and cultivates multiplicity, key concepts in the overlap of literary and media studies. Researching theories of authorship, style, and experimentation, we discuss the work of writers who double up, and double down on, conventional ways of relating to form.

**Content Warning CW (TW):** In this course, we will need to work together to practice consent in discussions of sexuality and sexual practice and sexual identity. At least two of the readings and two additional texts for discussion include explicit written representation of sexual practices. In relation to and apart from this porn factor, the course may solicit relatively intensive self-exploration.

Course material may include slurs, nudity, violence, sex, misgendering, and reference to sexual assault and harassment, as well as cissexist and heterosexist social mores and assumptions and traces of the racism, ableism, and sexism of white Anglocentric elitism. This material and commentary may appear without advance warning. If representations and discussion of expressive sexuality, substance use, self-harm, social variance, sex work, and social and sexual taboo transgression present any problems for you, please let the professor (and/or the group) know to avoid it or take extra care.
Expectations
* Practice self-care for trigger mitigation. Read, re-read, and study assigned texts. Prepare questions and comments for discussion. Review your notes and materials. Respect people’s backgrounds, names, pronouns, contributions, frames of reference, and digital space. For example, do not guess someone’s pronoun. Let the professor know, to the extent you can, your access points for course materials, as well as any accommodations you may need or want.

Schedule

(“Sub”)cultural specificity

**WEEK ONE**
T 9/29 + TH 10/1
Encounters with “versatility”

**WEEK TWO**
T 10/6 + TH 10/8
* writing exercise due Friday

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F 10/9
* writing exercise due
WEEK THREE  T 10/13 + TH 10/15
* writing exercise due Friday

The Papi Project (California LGBT Arts Alliance)

F 10/9
* writing exercise due

More cultural context

WEEK FOUR  T 10/20 + TH 10/22
* short essay due next Monday

“Audre Lorde” (Schomburg Center Literary Festival)

WEEK FIVE  T 10/27 + TH 10/29
M 10/26
* short essay due

“Marking Time” (Schomburg Center Literary Festival)
WEEK SIX  T 11/3 + TH 11/5

* writing exercise due Friday

“Black Romantic Revolution”

F 11/6

* writing exercise due today

Academic abstraction

WEEK SEVEN  T 11/10 + TH 11/12

Synonyms and spatial metaphors

WEEK EIGHT  T 11/17 + TH 11/19

* proposal due Wednesday, 11/18

W 11/18

* proposal due, by written submission or live pitch
WEEK NINE  

T 11/24

Work time

TH 11/26 no class

WEEK TEN  

T 12/1 + TH 12/3

* Wrap-up assignment of your choice due Thursday

TH 12/3

* Wrap-up due

W 12/9

* 

Project due

Wednesday, December 9

* No final exam