FYS: Culture, Social Structure, and HIV/AIDS in the United States

10:30-11:30 MWF

Fall 2011

**Instructor:** Alicia Suarez

**Office:** Asbury Hall 305

**Office hours:** 2:30-3:30 M W; F 1-2 (or by appointment)

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**FYS Resource team**

**Student mentors:** Nicole Burts and Nathan Mullins

**Librarian:** Kathryn Millis  
**S Consultant:** Sharon Hayes

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Should persons with HIV/AIDS be legally required to wear a tattoo showing their status? You may be shocked that this question was ever seriously discussed by lawmakers in the United States. You have grown up with the specter of HIV/AIDS in the background of your life. Indeed, HIV was “discovered” before you were born. However, you have probably not given serious thought to the cultural and political factors that have shaped our understanding of HIV/AIDS.

In this course, we will use a variety of approaches to understand the HIV/AIDS epidemic with a specific focus on the United States. We will use a sociological and historical frame to appreciate the controversies regarding scientific knowledge production, the rise of patients as activists/experts, and the role of sexual politics. Throughout the course, we will pay attention to the ethical and legal dilemmas surrounding HIV/AIDS and the role of public sentiment in perpetuating stigma and discrimination towards persons with HIV/AIDS. We will address the lived experiences of persons in the United States with HIV/AIDS. We will address questions such as: What are the ramifications of the cultural construction of HIV/AIDS as a “gay disease?” Why is it significant that many gay men were so greatly affected by the disease in the 1980s? What was/is it like to live and/or die with HIV/AIDS in the 1980s, 1990s and in the 21st century? How do race, class, gender, and sexual orientation affect lived experiences with HIV/AIDS? What are the experiences of those who work with persons with HIV/AIDS?

We will participate in volunteer work with local HIV/AIDS organizations, in order for you to gain first hand experience and most importantly, to engage in social activism. We will sponsor an awareness campaign on campus for World AIDS Day in December. In conjunction with your participation in social activism, you will incorporate findings from your research paper on an aspect of HIV/AIDS with our awareness campaign for World AIDS Day.

**COURSE GOALS**

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

▪Understand the role of sexual politics, moral condemnation, scientific competition, and economics in the history and current climate regarding HIV/AIDS in the United States.

▪ Deconstruct literature, ask questions when you do not understand readings, and fully participate in a college level seminar through active participation by both talking and listening.

▪Use library services, both physically and electronically.

▪Gather *scholarly* publications and disseminate the material to construct a literature review.

▪Understand academic integrity and how to properly cite sources.

▪ Be able to take information you are learning about and clearly tell others about the material.

▪Appreciate the role that service and social activism can have in affecting social change.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

Bayer, Ronald and Gerald M. Oppenheimer. 2000. *AIDS Doctors: Voices from the*

*Epidemic.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cochrane, Michelle. 2004. *When AIDS Began: San Francisco and the Making of an*

*Epidemic.* New York: Routledge.

Siplon, Patricia D. 2002. *AIDS and the Policy Struggle in the United States.* Washington,

D.C: Georgetown University Press.

Whetten-Goldstein, Kathryn and Trang Quyen Nguyen. 2002. *“You’re the First One I’ve*

*Told”: New Faces of HIV in the South.* New Brunswich, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

The required articles are available through Library Course Reserves on Moodle.

### EVALUATION

**Reaction Papers:** You will write 8 reaction papers about the books and article we read. Four reaction papers based on readings must be turned in by **October 12 (before Fall Break).** You will write 2 reaction papers in response to the two in class films: *And the Band Played On* and *Philadelphia*  (see schedule for due dates for these)*.*  My goal is for you to learn though writing how to engage with the material we are reading/viewing. My evaluation of these papers will reflect this goal. You choose which days to turn in your reaction paper (except for the two films-see schedule). Of course, we must have readings for that day!

You should describe the **main** points in a FEW sentences to demonstrate you understand the material. The bulk of the paper is NOT a summary of the readings/films. Instead focus on your personal reaction to the readings/films (and may be casual/informal in tone). Excellent papers will incorporate thoughtful reflections and comparisons to other readings. You may address some of the following questions:

Did you agree or disagree with the author’s ideas or opinions? Explain why (support your stance) and used evidence from the text/film. Did you want more information or more support for their argument? How do other readings (from our class) refute or support the reading/narrative? What questions remain for you or what questions would you like to pose to the class.

Think of these papers as your “notes” to help you participate in discussion. You will likely be asked to READ these aloud in class. You may find these challenging at first, but will become more comfortable as the semester progresses and you gain experience writing these and understanding how to support your opinion. They will be approximately 2-3 pages long, typed, and double-spaced. These will be graded on a 10 point scale. You may turn in 1 “extra” reaction paper to replace a low score on a previous reaction paper.

**Research Paper (Literature Review):** You will write a research paper on HIV/AIDS that you will draw on for our World AIDS Day activity. Please see handout on Research Paper for further details.

**World AIDS Day Activity:** The class will organize an awareness event for December 1, World AIDS Day. Each of you will be responsible for presenting information you have learned about in your research paper to the DePauw community. We will talk about this activity and develop our plans together in class. You will keep a log of you and your peers’ participation in planning the event and write a brief reflection on your experiences (due December ­5). See handout.

**Volunteer Participation and Reflection Paper:** You can choose to participate in the AIDS Walk and Ride 2011 on October 8, a fundraising event for the Indiana AIDS Fund, or volunteer at the Damien Center’s Grand Masquerade fundraising event on October 22. Of course, you may do both of the events, but are only required to attend one!\* After participating in the event, you will write a 3-4 page typed, double spaced paper reflecting on your experiences at the event AND how it relates to course readings and discussions. Although this is a casual paper written in first person about your experiences, when you refer to any readings, you must properly cite them and turn in a works cited page. The reflection papers are due the Monday after the event (see schedule below).

\*If your schedule does not permit attendance at one of these events, you may choose to watch the HBO TV mini-series *Angels in America* (approximately 6 hours total and on reserve in the library) and write a 5-6 paged typed, double spaced paper reflecting on the mini-series, your reaction to it AND how it related to course readings and discussions.

**Class Participation:** As this course is a seminar course, your absolute engagement and participation is necessary for the success of the course. Thus, your active engagement will be assessed throughout the semester. Remember, talking too much is NOT necessarily a good thing! Listening is also crucial for your participation.

**Leading class discussion/activity (15 points \*2):** In small groups of 2 or 3, you will lead discussion twice during the semester (see schedule below). You should have questions prepared to get the class discussing the readings due that day. You should NOT outline the main points or summarize the readings---everyone is capable of doing that outside of class. The activity should be interactive as well and not a presentation. The goal is to stimulate discussion, debate, etc. about the topic/readings you are covering. If applicable, you may require the class to do some “homework” in preparation. You may bring in outside material (newspaper articles, film/TV clips, current events, etc.) that will facilitate these goals. This should last 15- 20 minutes.

Group 1: Abigail Baylon, Asha Boyd and Hannah Buddig

Group 2: Rebecca Carreno and Boyu Meng

Group 3: Hien Nguyen and Madeline Perry

Group 4: Alexandra Reed and Jonathan Reyes

Group 5: Shadman Shahriar and Lesly Solares

Group 6: Richard Walsh and T’Kia Williams

**Grading:**

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| --- | --- |
| **Reaction Papers** | **100 points** |
| **Research Paper** | **100 points** |
| **World AIDS Day Activity** | **80 points** |
| **Volunteer Participation and Reflection Paper** | **50 points** |
| **Class Participation** | **70 points** |
| **Total** | **400 points** |

I will follow the usual DePauw University grading system whereby:

A or A- reflects, “achievement of exceptionally high merit.”

B+, B, B- reflects, “achievement at a level superior to the basic level.”

C+, C, C- reflects, “basic achievement.”

D+, D, D- reflects, “achievement which falls short of satisfying the quantitative and qualitative requirements yet warrants credit.”

Remember, you do not start the course with an A and lose points. You essentially start with zero points and *earn* your grades along the way. Please meet with me if at any time you have questions about your grades. **Do not wait until the end of the semester**.

\*\*\* An important point to note about grades. Grades do NOT reflect your effort, but the result of your efforts. We are not all alike and some of us must put forth more effort while others put forth minimal effort and earn higher marks. We are simply diverse people with different talents and abilities. Therefore, I do NOT grade your effort.

### OTHER POLICIES

**Attendance and Participation:** I expect you to attend class prepared and ready to *engage* with the material and the class community. Simply showing up to class having skimmed the readings is insufficient. If everyone does this, we will have a boring class (and you will have to listen to me the whole time). If only a few people are prepared, we will only know their opinions and miss out on the full classroom experience of everyone participating. Again, **participation** is a crucial element of a seminar course.

Coming to class late is a disruption to all members of the class. Tardiness and absences will be penalized at my discretion. If you are frequently late to class, you can expect a conversation with me or an email from me reminding you of your obligation to be in class on time. I will notify you if you are in danger of having your grade reduced due to tardiness or absences. This is no joke. During a typical semester, I will usually contact about 5 students to discuss tardiness or attendance. Don’t let it happen to you. **In the event that you are absent, you are solely responsible for being informed of what went on during class.**

**Classroom Etiquette:** In order to have a positive and safe learning environment, we as a class will have to agree to disagree at times. Some of us may have strong feelings and/or reactions to class materials, readings, etc. Expressing these reactions is encouraged as long as this is done in a respectful manner. Hostile and/or disrespectful behavior is not allowed. In addition, we must be watchful to not take up too much “airtime” and allow for *everyone* to share. Talking *a lot* is generally *not* a good way of actively participating. Instead, carefully listening to others and clearly and concisely expressing your input is the best strategy. Remember to address each other when talking rather than directing your comments to me (unless they are solely intended for me!) Of course, texting is absolutely inappropriate in a college classroom. I also highly discourage the use of laptops in a seminar course as it interferes with active participation.

**Communication:** Please come and visit me during office hours. I am there waiting for you to discuss readings, lecture, grading, exams, classroom behaviors, sociology, etc. If you cannot come to scheduled office hours, please let me know and we will work something else out. The best way to reach me is through e-mail. I will communicate with the class through email. I expect each of you to check e-mail on a *daily* basis.

**Late work/Make-up Work:** All papers are due at the beginning of class, unless, I receive *in advance*, an official notification that you will be off-campus on official university business or some other *legitimate and verifiable* excused absence. Late papers are subject to a drop in letter grade. There will be NO EXTRA CREDIT assignments available to anyone.

**Academic Dishonesty/Misconduct:** I take academic dishonesty or misconduct extremely seriously as surely you do as well. Please be familiar with the DePauw University Academic Integrity Policy available in the *Student Handbook.* Any student violating this policy will be subject to a range of disciplinary actions.

**Students with Disabilities:** DePauw University offers accommodations to students with disabilities. It is your responsibility to contact the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) coordinator: Pamela Roberts, 302 Harrison Hall to request accommodations.

### SCHEDULE

Readings must be completed *prior* to class on the due date. We may get off schedule and I will make adjustments accordingly in the event that this occurs.

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| 8/24 (W) | Introduction to Class |
| **Introduction to Sexuality in the United States: Behaviors, Identities, and Culture** | |
| 8/26 (F) | *Seidman* |
| 8/29 (M) | *Barrett and Pollack; Berg; Saleh and Operario*  **Group 1 leads discussion** |
| 8/31 (W) | *Han; Walch* |
| **The Social Construction of an Epidemic** | |
| 9/2 (F) | Cochrane Intro  *Treichler* |
| 9/5 (M) | Cochrane Ch. 1  **Group 2 leads discussion** |
| 9/7 (W) | Cochrane Ch. 2  **Speaker: “HIV 101” Damien Center** |
| 9/9 (F) | Library session (meet in lobby of Roy O) |
| 9/12 (M) | Cochrane Ch. 3  **Group 3 leads discussion** |
| 9/14 (W) | Cochrane Ch. 4  **Group 4 leads discussion** |
| 9/16 (F) | Cochrane Ch. 5  **Group 5 leads discussion** |
| 9/19 (M) | Cochrane Ch. 6  **Group 6 leads discussion** |
| 9/21 (W) | Cochrane Ch. 7 |
| 9/23 (F) | In class work shop on research papers  **Turn in Works Cited for research paper** |
| 9/26 (M) | *And the Band Played On* in class movie (meet in Roy O) |
| 9/28 (W) | *And the Band Played On* in class movie (meet in Roy O) |
| 9/30 (F) | *And the Band Played On* in class movie (meet in Roy O) |
| **AIDS Policy Struggles** | |
| 10/3 (M) | Siplon Chapter 1  **Reaction paper due for *And the Band Played On*** |
| 10/5 (W) | Siplon Chapter 2-3  **Group 1 leads discussion** |
| 10/7 (F) | Siplon Chapter 4-5 |
| **10/8 (Saturday)** | **Indiana AIDS Walk and Ride, Indianapolis, IN. Noon-5pm.** |
| 10/10 (M) | Siplon Chapter 6-7  **Reflection papers for AIDS Walk and Ride due** |
| **Living with HIV/AIDS and Providing Services to People with HIV/AIDS** | |
| 10/12 (W) | Whetten-Goldstein Ch. 1-2  **4 Reflection papers due by today** |
| 10/14 (F) | **Research paper due for in class peer review** |
| 10/15-10/23 | Fall Break |
| **10/22 (Sat)** | **Grand Masquerade, Indianapolis, IN** |
| 10/24 (M) | Whetten-Goldstein Ch. 3-4  **Group 2 leads discussion**  **Reflection papers for Grand Masquerade or *Angels in America* due** |
| 10/26 (W) | Whetten-Goldstein Ch. 5-6 |
| 10/28 (F) | Whetten-Goldstein Ch. 7-8  **Group 3 leads discussion** |
| 10/31 (M) | Whetten-Goldstein Ch. 9-10  **Group 4 leads discussion** |
| 11/2 (W) | Whetten-Goldstein Ch. 11 |
| 11/4 (F) | **Speaker** |
| 11/7 (M) | Bayer Intro and Ch. 1 |
| 11/9 (W) | Bayer Ch. 2  **Group 5 leads discussion** |
| 11/11 (F) | **Research paper draft due for 2nd peer review** |
| 11/14 (M) | Bayer Ch. 3  **Commentary on peer’s paper due (2 copies)** |
| 11/16 (W) | Bayer Ch. 4  **Group 6 leads discussion** |
| 11/18 (F) | Bayer Ch. 5 |
| 11/21 (M) | **Speaker** |
| 11/23-11/27 | Thanksgiving break |
| 11/28 (M) | World AIDS Day planning |
| 11/30 (W) | World AIDS Day planning |
| **12/1 (Th)** | **WORLD AIDS DAY** |
| 12/2 (F) | Debriefing |
| 12/5 (M) | *Philadelphia-*in class movie (meet in Roy O)  **World AIDS Day Reflection/Log due** |
| 12/7 (W) | *Philadelphia-*in class movie (meet in Roy O) |
| 12/9 (F) | *Philadelphia-*in class movie (meet in Roy O) |
| 12/14 (W) | Due in my office by11:30 am  **Reaction paper due for *Philadelphia***  **Final Research Papers due** |

Barrett, Donald C. and Lance M. Pollack. 2005. “Whose Gay Community? Social Class,

Sexual Self-Expression, and Gay Community Involvement.” *Sociological Quarterly* 46: 437-456.

Berg, Rigmor C. 2009. “Barebacking: A Review of the Literature.” *Archives of Sexual*

*Behavior* 38: 754-764.

Han, Chong-suk. 2007. “They Don’t Want to Cruise Your Type: Gay Men of Color and

the Racial Politics of Exclusion.” *Social Identities* 13: 51-67.

Saleh, Lena Denise and Don Operario. 2009. “Moving beyond “the Down Low”: A Critical Analysis of Terminology Guiding HIV Prevention Efforts for African American Men Who Have Secretive Sex with Men.” *Social Science and Medicine* 68: 390-395.

Seidman, Steven. 2003. *The Social Construction of Sexuality.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Walch, Susan E., Paula M. Orlosky, Kimberly A. Sinkkanen, and Heather R. Stevens.

2010. “Demographic and Social Factors Associated with Homophobia and Fear of AIDS in a Community Sample.” *Journal of Homosexuality* 57:310-324.