

THEATRE 4380
LGBTQ+ Theatre
Spring 2025
Lang 311
Fridays 9:00 AM-11:50 AM

Professor: Dr. Gina Weber
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Office: Fridays by appointment.

I. Course Description

This course will examine contemporary plays with a concentration in LGBTQA+ performance and production. We will back up the timeline of these plays to the early twentieth century, and see it progress over the decades into today. We will examine significant plays, playwrights, and theatre groups that produced those plays. The course is geared towards those interested in both theatrical production and criticism. This is a genre within theatre of the oppressed. We will survey historic representations of queer life, which involved a persistent drumbeat of suffering and triumph, including suicide, alcoholism, abuse, persecution, loss, and resurgence. Therefore, in addition to script and production analysis, we will discuss political actions and ramifications, social and cultural contexts, current events, and sociological identities and roles.

II. Course Goals

The goals of the course are to:

- A. Introduce students to a variety of performance texts and styles.
- B. Analyze and comprehend play scripts.
- C. Develop an appreciation for the cultural expressions of Queer theatre in its many aspects.
- D. Motivate students to examine their own political, economic, social, and cultural positions to prepare students to reside and contribute to an increasingly diverse society.

III. Introduction to the Course

THEA 4380 LGBTQ+ is a study of various dramatic texts, thus, requiring detailed reading and critical examination. Typically, we will analyze a play each week in our ongoing search to find production and performance values in each play.

IV. Course Requirements

A. Grading

Open discussion is essential. A point system will be used to determine your final course grade. Each assignment for this course will have a point value. The grade for this course will be based on the following assignments:

1. Weekly play analysis/Homework: Read and submit the assigned weekly play analyses. Look for recurrent images, phrases, ideas, events, character types that give the work its coherence.

Your analysis should include the following questions:

- What are the key ideas presented in the play?
- What is the most significant thing(s) you learned by reading the play?
- What question(s) is uppermost in your mind after reading it?

How is the information/issue applicable today?

Think of the assignment as if you are a theater critic. While the reading material for the course may be at times intellectually rigorous, it should also be an important personal experience--sometimes joyful, sometimes disturbing.

This assignment should help you formulate and crystallize your general vision of LGBTQ+ theatre. Your reading response should be no more than a couple paragraphs. You can also be creative and submit a video of the assignment, a recorded monologue, podcast, or stage and costume ideas. Please submit all assignments in Canvas under "Assignments." Assignments are due the **Thursday, by 11:59 pm before class, submit via Canvas. Late assignments will not be accepted.**

(50 pts each 11 plays = total of 550 pts, includes class attendance and participation see below in other factors for grading)

2. Individual Presentations: Students will be assigned a date during the semester to present a topic related to a LGBTQ+ company, a self-identified queer theatre, theater artist, or play. **(150 points)**

3. Final Project Work: To be discussed in detail later in the semester. **(250 points)**

4. Total Points: 1000

The final semester grade will appear in letter form, according to the UNT grading system:

900-1000--"A"

800-899--"B"

700-799--"C"

600-699--"D"

599 points or below--"F"

Two important additional factors determining your final grade:

1. Attendance

You are expected to attend on time each class for the entire period. Please consult the syllabus and will be expected to keep up - even if you miss a class. Active class participation is important, and you need to be in class to participate. In class exercises and discussions cannot be made up. A seminar is a living organism that feeds on the discussion of its participants. I allow 3 absences over the course of the semester.

After 3 absences, each additional absence lowers your grade by one letter grade (A to B, B to a C, etc.) Class will start on time every day. Your class participation grade will be determined based upon your contribution to discussions. Therefore, attendance is expected and will factor into your final grade.

2. Participation:

A vital element of every class will be discussion and participation. Beneficial discussion is only possible if everyone keeps up with the reading assignments. It is also expected that you give your undivided attention, respect, and support to your classmates during discussions and presentations.

B. Communication:

I want to be as accessible to you as I can be. I will meet before and after class as requested and by appointment. I encourage you to meet with me to discuss any aspect of this course or

whatever else is on your mind. If you cannot meet before or after class, please email me. I will do my best to respond as soon as possible.

C. Plagiarism:

Play analysis is part of the process by which the written script is translated into living action on the stage. The focus is on developing interpretive skills, rather than to gather facts. Any information you transmit from another source, such as a previous course or your own reading, must be cited. All the work you do in this course must be entirely your own, except for cited references to sources, as mentioned above. Plagiarism will result in receiving a grade of “0” for the assignment. According to UNT policy, specifically in the Students Rights and responsibilities, plagiarism is grounds for a failing grade in the course and/or possible disciplinary action. Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

D. Student Support Services

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are a few resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA), (<https://disability.unt.edu>)
- Pride Alliance (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)
- UNT Food Pantry (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

ADA Accommodation Statement UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

E. Final Note:

Conversations or topics that discussed in class may be uncomfortable to some, including the plays assigned. Sexuality, gender, personal relationships, political and religious beliefs, and personal ideals will be examined. Discussion will undoubtedly be candid and possibly bold. My hope is that you will approach this course with a sense of intellectual wonder and adventure. My goal is to expand your knowledge of the queer experience. This requires that you take as much responsibility for your own education as I do in creating an environment where learning is for everyone. I approach this work as a mutual exchange of ideas, theories, hypotheses, and propositions about how queer theatre works within contemporary U.S. society. I will not merely feed you information, just as you will not accept all that I say without thinking critically.

I will provide **ALL** reading materials on Canvas. You do not need to purchase any texts or plays for this course.

Plays

1960s and Stonewall Uprising

The Boys in the Band by Mart Crowley

1970-1980

Bent by Martin Sherman

Remedial English by Evan Smith

1980-1990 and AIDS

The Laramie Project by Moises Kaufman

The Inheritance by Matthew Lopez

Contemporary Queer Theater

Hedwig and the Angry Inch by Stephen Trask

Blu by Virginia Grise

Indecent by Paula Vogel

A Strange Loop Michael R. Jackson

Wolf Play by Hansol Jung

Swimming While Drowning by Emilio Rodriguez

ALL PORTIONS OF THIS SYLLABUS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Course Calendar

Friday, January 17, 2025 Class introduction and syllabus review	Homework: Read <i>The Boys in the Band</i> by Mart Crowley
1960s and Stonewall Uprising	
January 24 Discuss <i>The Boys in the Ban</i> ZOOM CLASS	Homework: Read <i>Bent</i> by Martin Sherman
1970-1980	
January 31 Discuss <i>Bent</i>	Homework: Read <i>Remedial English</i> by Evan Smith
1980-1990 and AIDS	
February 7 Discuss <i>Remedial English</i>	Homework: Read <i>The Laramie Project</i> by Moises Kaufman

February 14 Discuss <i>The Laramie Project</i>	Homework: View documentary Watch and review documentary <i>Celluloid Closet</i> available online: https://discover.library.unt.edu/catalog/b6198645 ***Start reading <i>The Inheritance</i> ***
February 21 NO CLASS	Homework: Read <i>The Inheritance</i> by Matthew Lopez
February 28 Discuss <i>The Inheritance</i> Guest: Jim Eigo	Homework: Read <i>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</i> by Stephen Trask
Contemporary Queer Theater	
March 7 Discuss <i>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</i>	Homework: Read <i>A Strange Loop</i> Michael R. Jackson
March 10-14 Spring Break	
March 21 Discuss <i>A Strange Loop</i>	Homework: Read <i>Blu</i> by Virginia Grice
March 28 Discuss <i>Blu</i> Guest: Virginia Grice Class Presentations	Homework: Read <i>Indecent</i> by Paula Vogel
April 4 Discuss <i>Indecent</i> Class Presentations	Homework: Read <i>Edith Can Shoot Things and Hit Them</i> by A. Rey Pamatmat
April 11 Discuss <i>Edith Can Shoot Things</i> Class Presentations	Homework: Read <i>Wolf Play</i> by Hansol Jung
April 18 Discuss <i>Wolf Play</i> Class Presentations	Homework: Read <i>Swimming While Drowning</i> by Emilio Rodriguez
April 25 Discuss <i>Swimming While Drowning</i> Guest: Emilio Rodriguez	
May 2 No Class, Reading Day!	<u>FINAL PROJECT DUE FRIDAY, May 9 by 12 noon!</u>