

**ENGL 288—SEXUAL DIVERSITY IN LITERATURE AND FILM**  
MWF 10:30-11:20 AM  
110 Woodburn

Prof. Adam Komisaruk (pronouns: he/him/his)  
Virtual Office Hours: MT 3:00–4:00 PM + by appointment  
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In ENGL 288, we will study cultural representations of a variety of sexual identities, attitudes and experiences (gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, trans, intersex, nonbinary, queer, and more) from antiquity to the present. We will also examine the way sexuality intersects with other social considerations such as race, ethnicity, economic class, religion, and geographic place to help define the contours of power. Genres will include poetry, drama, fiction, prose nonfiction, and film; as well as essays by influential theorists of sex and gender.

ENGL 288 may not be used toward any GEF/GEC requirements, but it may be used toward the Gender/Multicultural/Transnational requirement of the English major.

### TEXTS

You may obtain the following through the WVU Bookstores or an online vendor. Digital copies are acceptable, but paper copies are preferable. Used copies are acceptable, but please try not to substitute different editions.

- Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood* (New Directions)
- John Cleland, *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure (Fanny Hill)*, ed. Richard Terry and Helen Williams (Broadview)
- Tony Kushner, *Angels in America, Part I (Millennium Approaches)* (Theatre Communications Group)
- Christopher Marlowe, *Edward II*, ed. Mathew Martin (Broadview)
- Plato, *Symposium*, ed. Christopher Gill (Penguin)
- Other materials to be provided via eCampus

### REQUIREMENTS

- Attendance at all class sessions, with assigned material completed and in hand. I will not be screening films during class time; like the readings, they should be prepared in advance. You may miss three (3) sessions without penalty; thereafter, for each unexcused absence I will deduct 2% of your course grade. Please do not ask me to review material covered in your absence; consult a classmate for missed notes and assignments.
- Two (2) analytical essays on the assigned material, approx. 5 pp. each. You will sign up for deadlines corresponding to the texts that you choose. Research is not required for these papers; all relevant material will be provided. Each counts 15% of course grade. You may revise **one** of your papers for extra credit.
- Midterm exam; in-class, objective (i.e., no essay questions). Counts 15% of course grade.
- Final exam; objective and essay questions. Counts 25% of course grade.
- Regular postings to the class discussion board on eCampus. These will allow you to reflect on the assigned material and help set the agenda for our live meetings. Posts are due by **9 AM** on the day

of class. You must post at least **twice** per week, either responding to a classmate's thread or starting your own. Collectively, counts 15% of course grade.

- The 15% of your course grade that remains will be made up by your overall attitude and contributions (exclusive of your discussion-board posts) to the learning environment of the class.

## GRADING CRITERIA

Your assignments will be evaluated according to:

- clarity, rigor and originality of argument
- thoroughness of engagement with textual evidence
- precision and sophistication of expression

The following scale will apply:

A+	100-97%	C+	79-77%
A	96-94%	C	76-74%
A-	93-90%	C-	73-70%
B+	89-87%	D+	69-67%
B	86-84%	D	66-64%
B-	83-80%	D-	63-60%
		F	60- %

## STUDENT ADVOCACY CENTER

“Part of the Campus and Community Life, a Division of Student Life, the Student Advocacy Center is comprised of the Senior Associate Dean of Student Life who serves as the Student Advocate, Student Legal Services, the Off-Campus Housing Office, Commuter Student Programs, Non-traditional Student Assistance, and the Student HelpLine. The goal of the Center is to assist students with non-academic questions and concerns and to make the proper referrals when necessary.

“Questions are answered daily about many concerns that students may have. The Advocacy Center is designed to simplify procedures and to help students cut through red tape by finding answers to questions and helping to familiarize our students with campus policies and procedures. We specialize in problem solving and helping our students be better informed about making the decisions they need to make, whether these decisions involve classes or any other aspect of university life.

“The Student HelpLine number is 304-293-5555.

“Someone is available to take calls during regular business hours. After hours, you may leave a message and someone will return your call during the next business day.”—WVU Office of Campus and Community Life (<https://campuslife.wvu.edu/student-advocacy>)

## **WVU STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

“The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, instructors will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of their courses. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the West Virginia University Academic Standards Policy (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/coursecredittermsclassification>). Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see your instructor before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.”—WVU Teaching and Learning Commons (<https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements#academicintegrity>)

## **WVU STATEMENT ON APPROPRIATE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

“Use of technology in the classroom should always be directly related to class activities and/or course learning outcomes. Inappropriate technology use can be an impediment to learning and a distraction to all members of the class. As such, inappropriate use of technology in the classroom may be considered a disruption of the class and constitute a violation of the WVU Student Conduct Code and could potentially result in a referral to the Office of Student Conduct. Use of technology in the classroom when specifically prohibited by the instructor may also constitute a violation of WVU’s Academic Integrity policy.”—WVU Teaching and Learning Commons (<https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements#tech>)

## **WVU STATEMENT ON COVID-19**

“WVU is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment for all students, faculty, and staff. Should campus operations change because of health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic or other campus-wide emergency, it is possible that this course will move to a fully online delivery format. If that occurs, students will be advised of technical and/or equipment requirements, including remote proctoring software.

“In a face-to-face environment, our commitment to safety requires students, staff, and instructors to observe the social distancing and personal protective equipment (PPE) guidelines set by the University at all times. While in class, students will sit in assigned seats when required and will wear PPE according to current University guidelines. Students who fail to comply may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for sanctions.

“COVID related absences fall under the University attendance policy found here: <http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/enrollmentandregistration/#Attendance>. As detailed in the policy, a student who becomes sick or is required to quarantine during the semester should notify the instructor. The student should then work with the instructor to develop a plan to complete the course learning outcomes while he or she is absent.” —WVU Teaching and Learning Commons ([https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements#covid\\_syllabus](https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements#covid_syllabus))

For the Fall 2021 semester, to facilitate contact tracing where necessary, WVU is requiring assigned seating in all on-campus courses. You will have until the end of August to settle on your preferred seat; after that, I will be submitting a chart labelled with names.

## WVU STATEMENT ON INCLUSIVITY (adopted 2/11/2013)

“The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services (<https://accessibilityservices.wvu.edu/>). More information is available at the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (<https://diversity.wvu.edu/>).”—WVU Teaching and Learning Commons (<https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements#inclusivity>)

Keeping my classroom a safe space is of the utmost importance to me, especially for ENGL 288. I always welcome suggestions about ways to further this goal.

## WVU STATEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH

“Mental health concerns or stressful events can adversely affect your academic performance and social relationships. WVU offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns that you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at the Carruth Center for Psychological and Psychiatric Services (CCPPS) website: <https://carruth.wvu.edu/>

“If you are in need of crisis services, call the CCPPS main number 24/7: (304) 293-4431. Crisis services are also available through text: Text WVU to 741741 for support 24/7 from a trained Crisis Counselor.”—WVU Teaching and Learning Commons (<https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements#mentalhealth-maincampus>)

## WVU STATEMENT ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

“West Virginia University does not tolerate sexual misconduct, including harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, or relationship violence (BOG Rule 1.6). It is important for you to know that there are resources available if you or someone you know needs assistance. You may speak to a member of university administration, faculty, or staff; keep in mind that they have an obligation to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator (<http://titleix.wvu.edu/what-is-title-ix/who-is-the-title-ix-coordinator>). If you want to speak to someone who is permitted to keep your disclosure confidential, please seek assistance from the Carruth Center, 304-293-9355 or 304-293-4431 (24-hour hotline), and locally within the community at the Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center (RDVIC), 304-292-5100 or 304-292-4431 (24-hour hotline).

For more information, please consult WVU’s Title IX Office (<https://titleix.wvu.edu/resources-offices>).”—WVU Teaching and Learning Commons (<https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements#sexualmisconduct>)

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Day	Date	Assignment DUE
			(* denotes separate text; others available electronically)
1	W	8/18	Introduction
1	F	8/20	Plato, <i>Symposium</i> *
2	M	8/23	Plato, <i>Symposium</i> *
2	W	8/25	Plato, <i>Symposium</i> *

2	F	8/27	Christopher Marlowe, <i>Edward II</i> *
3	M	8/30	Christopher Marlowe, <i>Edward II</i> *
3	W	9/1	Christopher Marlowe, <i>Edward II</i> *
3	F	9/3	Christopher Marlowe, <i>Edward II</i> *
<b>4</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>9/6</b>	<b>LABOR DAY—NO CLASS</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>9/8</b>	<b>ROSH HASHANAH—NO CLASS</b>
4	F	9/10	Derek Jarman, <i>Edward II</i> (film)
5	M	9/13	Derek Jarman, <i>Edward II</i> (film)
<b>5</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>9/15</b>	<b>YOM KIPPUR—NO CLASS</b>
5	F	9/17	John Cleland, <i>Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure</i> *
6	M	9/20	John Cleland, <i>Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure</i> *
6	W	9/22	John Cleland, <i>Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure</i> *
6	F	9/24	John Cleland, <i>Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure</i> *
7	M	9/27	Thomas Laqueur, from <i>Making Sex</i>
7	W	9/29	Thomas Laqueur, from <i>Making Sex</i>
7	F	10/1	Thomas Laqueur, from <i>Making Sex</i>
8	M	10/4	Review, etc.
<b>8</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>10/6</b>	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>10/8</b>	<b>FALL BREAK—NO CLASS</b>
9	M	10/11	Djuna Barnes, <i>Nightwood</i> *
9	W	10/13	Djuna Barnes, <i>Nightwood</i> *
9	F	10/15	Djuna Barnes, <i>Nightwood</i> *
10	M	10/18	Tony Kushner, <i>Angels in America I (Millennium Approaches)</i> *
10	W	10/20	Tony Kushner, <i>Angels in America I (Millennium Approaches)</i> *
10	F	10/22	Tony Kushner, <i>Angels in America I (Millennium Approaches)</i> *
11	M	10/25	Tony Kushner, <i>Angels in America I (Millennium Approaches)</i> *
11	W	10/27	Leo Bersani, “Is the Rectum a Grave?”
11	F	10/29	Leo Bersani, “Is the Rectum a Grave?”
12	M	11/1	Queer Writing in Appalachia: Carter Sickels (“Saving”)
12	W	11/3	Queer Writing in Appalachia: Jenny Johnson, Guest Speaker (poems)
12	F	11/5	Queer Writing in Appalachia: Ann Pancake, Guest Speaker (“Our Own Kind”)
13	M	11/8	Cheryl Dunye, <i>The Watermelon Woman</i> (film)
13	W	11/10	Cheryl Dunye, <i>The Watermelon Woman</i> (film)
13	F	11/12	Cheryl Dunye, <i>The Watermelon Woman</i> (film)
14	M	11/15	Carmen Maria Machado, “The Husband Stitch”; “Mothers”; “My Body, Herself”
14	W	11/17	Carmen Maria Machado, “The Husband Stitch”; “Mothers”; “My Body, Herself”

14	F	11/19	Carmen Maria Machado, “The Husband Stitch”; “Mothers”; “My Body, Herself”
	<b>M</b>	<b>11/22</b>	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS</b>
	<b>W</b>	<b>11/24</b>	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS</b>
	<b>F</b>	<b>11/26</b>	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS</b>
15	M	11/29	Judith Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination”
15	W	11/31	Judith Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination”
15	F	12/2	John Cameron Mitchell, <i>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</i> (film)
16	M	12/6	John Cameron Mitchell, <i>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</i> (film)
16	W	12/8	Review, etc.
<b>Exam</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>12/16</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM 2:00-4:00 PM</b>