Since roughly the middle of the nineteenth century, it has become important for some of us, in some parts of the world, to identify ourselves according to categories such as gender and sexuality, categories further subdivided along some of the lines suggested by the acronym LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender). This course seeks to give students the opportunity to wrestle with what’s at stake in this process of identification, as well as the alternatives to identity (and gender and sexuality) that have arisen in earlier and other cultures. From ancient pedagogical eros, through medieval conceptions of nature and its abuses, to early modern mappings of sexual strangeness onto non-European bodies, we’ll examine the prehistory of our modern identities, even as we engage with the limits of those identities here and now.

This course explores what has been termed “the modern plague.” It investigates the social history, cultural politics, biological processes, and global impact of the retrovirus, HIV, and the disease syndrome, AIDS. It engages material from multiple fields: life sciences, social sciences, & humanities as well as media reports, government documents, activist art, and community-based documentaries. It explores various meanings and life-experiences of HIV & AIDS; examines conflicting understandings of health, disease, the body; investigates political struggles over scientific research, biomedical & public health interventions, and cultural representations; and queries how HIV vulnerability is shaped by systems of power and inequality. As well, we come to learn about the practices, the politics, and the ethics of life and care that arise in “the age of epidemic.”

In this course, we will delve into the neuroscience of gender difference. Reading the original scientific papers and related critical texts, we will ask whether we can find measureable physical differences in male and female brains, and what these differences might be. Do men and women solve spatial puzzles differently, as measured physiologically? Do nonhuman animals display sex-specific behaviors mediated by brain structure, and can we extrapolate these findings to human behavior? Why are boys three times more likely than girls to be diagnosed as autistic, and is there any connection between the predominantly male phenomenon of autism and other stereotypically male mental traits? Are there physical representations of sexual orientation in the brain, and how are these related to gender identity? And how are scientific studies represented and misrepresented in popular debate?
LGBT 4160  Gender and Sexuality in Southeast Asia  
W  2:30-4:25  T. Loos

Students consider the relationships among colonialism and gender and sexual identity formation in Southeast Asia. Using material from a wide range of fields including anthropology and literature, the course complicates the simplistic East/West and male/female binary. Each year the course is offered, its emphasis shifts to adapt to changes in the fields of gender, sexuality and Asian Studies. It incorporates theoretical literature and content that is broader than that of Southeast Asia.

LGBT 4701  Nightlife  
TR  1:25-2:40  K. Jaime

This course explores nightlife as a temporality that fosters countercultural performances of the self and that serves as a site for the emergence of alternative kinship networks. Focusing on queer communities of color, course participants will be asked to interrogate the ways in which nightlife demonstrates the queer world-making potential that exists beyond the normative 9-5 capitalist model of production. Performances of the everyday, alongside films, texts, and performance art, will be analyzed through a performance studies methodological lens. Through close readings and sustained cultural analysis, students will acquire a critical understanding of the potentiality of spaces, places, and geographies codified as "after hours" in the development of subcultures, alternative sexualities, and emerging performance practice.

LGBT 4710  Late Theory  
W  2:30-4:25  N. Salvato

This seminar explores theoretical work in which lateness figures as the signal condition, gesture, problem, or method. We begin with two topics prominent in twentieth-century criticism: late style and late capitalism. We then pivot to contemporary theory “after” theory—or what Amy Holzapfel calls “subprime critique”: works marked variously by senses or intimations of belatedness, loss, exhaustion, and decay. Throughout, theoretical readings are paired with an eclectic set of art objects, ranging from literary fictions (James, Baldwin) to more and less popular television series (The Sopranos, Roseanne’s Nuts) to avant-garde performances (The Lily’s Revenge, Discotropic). Authors may include Adorno, Agamben, Berlant, Jameson, Mbembe, Moten, Said, and Sedgwick. Issues of ability, age, class, gender, race, and sexuality are foregrounded. (HTC)
LGBT 4945       Body Politics in African Literature and Cinema
W      2:30-4:25       N. Diabate

The course examines how postcolonial African writers and filmmakers engage with and revise controversial images of bodies and sexuality—genital cursing, same-sex desire, HIV/AIDS, genital surgeries, etc. Our inquiry also surveys African theorists’ troubling of problematic tropes and practices such as the conception in 19th-century racist writings of the colonized as embodiment, the pathologization and hypersexualization of colonized bodies, and the precarious and yet empowering nature of the body and sexuality in the postcolonial African experience. As we focus on African artists and theorists, we also read American and European theorists, including but not certainly limited to Giorgio Agamben, Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, and Joseph Slaughter, detecting the ways in which discourses around bodies in the African context may shape contemporary theories and vice versa.

LGBT 6160       Gender and Sexuality in Southeast Asia
W      2:30-4:25       T. Loos

Students consider the relationships among colonialism and gender and sexual identity formation in Southeast Asia. Using material from a wide range of fields including anthropology and literature, the course complicates the simplistic East/West and male/female binary. Each year the course is offered, its emphasis shifts to adapt to changes in the fields of gender, sexuality and Asian Studies. It incorporates theoretical literature and content that is broader than that of Southeast Asia.

LGBT 6710       Late Theory
W      2:30-4:25       N. Salvato

This seminar explores theoretical work in which lateness figures as the signal condition, gesture, problem, or method. We begin with two topics prominent in twentieth-century criticism: late style and late capitalism. We then pivot to contemporary theory “after” theory—or what Amy Holzapfel calls “subprime critique”: works marked variously by senses or intimations of belatedness, loss, exhaustion, and decay. Throughout, theoretical readings are paired with an eclectic set of art objects, ranging from literary fictions (James, Baldwin) to more and less popular television series (The Sopranos, Roseanne’s Nuts) to avant-garde performances (The Lily's Revenge, Discotropic). Authors may include Adorno, Agamben, Berlant, Jameson, Mbembe, Moten, Said, and Sedgwick. Issues of ability, age, class, gender, race, and sexuality are foregrounded. (HTC)