

**GS/SO315 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF SEXUALITY AND GENDER IN THE CONTEXT OF
AMSTERDAM
IES Abroad Amsterdam**

DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces students to the study of gender and sexuality. The Netherlands, and especially Amsterdam as a relative small scale city, is a particularly appropriate location for such a course. While the Netherlands lives up to its liberal reputation that allows students to explore sexuality and gender as multi-faceted academic venues, current political and social tensions in Holland and in Europe demonstrate how those very subjects can be turned into contested areas and can have exclusionary effects.

The following themes will be covered in the course: transgender issues, sex education, sex work, sexual nationalism, histories of sexuality, and sexual and gender identities. In studying these themes, the course takes an interdisciplinary approach in which students learn to critically compare perspectives on sexuality, in which they understand historical and current shaping of knowledge concerning sexuality and gender. Attention will be paid to historical processes in which popular and scientific knowledge reinforced one another and created common sense knowledge on sexuality and gender. The course will raise awareness about hierarchies of knowledge in these matters and the consequences thereof, such as giving rise to homosexual and transgender identities, but also to medical and psychiatric interventions. Next to course-related field trips, guest lectures, and readings, class discussions that stimulate critical exchange, will prepare students for further academic pursuits.

The study of sexuality and gender offers a fascinating cross-section of Amsterdam/Dutch culture and this program gives the participants ample opportunity to explore some specific aspects of that culture. Yet, while sensitizing them to the topics as well as to local peculiarities and differences with other locations, the course is especially meant to learn more generally to question common sense knowledge concerning sexuality. The course will start with assignments vis-à-vis observations and reflexivity that will challenge students' pre-conceived notions as well as their own subjectivities in these matters.

Students are required to write a research paper on a topic related to the course, with a special focus on the Netherlands, which at the end of the course will also be presented and discussed in class. Throughout the course in class, in tutorials and if necessary in individual meetings with the tutor, selecting proper and feasible topics, contacts with individuals or institutions, as well as finding and selecting relevant literature or other materials will be closely supervised.

CREDITS: 4 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 60 hours

LANGUAGE OF PRESENTATION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Lectures, group work, class discussions, in class exercises and course-related trips

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

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|------------------------------|-----|
| • Active class participation | 10% |
| • Class lecture | 10% |
| • Diary assignment | 10% |
| • Paper proposal | 10% |

- Midterm exam 20%
- Final paper & paper presentation 40%

Students will be graded on a European scale of 1-10, with a 5.5 being required to pass. No student will be able to pass the course if any assignment is not completed. Assignments are due before the session, unless instructed otherwise. All assignments need to be handed in to be able to pass the course.

Active class participation

Students are required to attend all classes and to actively participate in discussions and in-class assignments. The grade for participation is based on active involvement in class discussions (with the acknowledgement that some need encouragement to express their views or raise questions) and knowledge of the assigned literature.

Class lecture

Every week a group of 2-3 students will prepare a presentation in which that week's theoretical stances are applied to practical examples. Students in charge of the presentations will inform us on the relevant case, research question or theme and provide input for our subsequent discussion. The presentation should include visual material (PowerPoint, short films, newspaper clippings, handouts, etc.). Please note that the presentation should not be a summary of the literature, but rather an application to a specific example that elucidates that week's theme.

Diary assignment

During the first session, students will be asked to keep a diary and to take 10 minutes each day to write about anything related to sexuality they observe around them, they experience, their own impulses, fantasies etc. This is similar to an anthropologist's diary; one possible source of knowledge.

During the next classes, students will be asked to continue keeping a diary.

In week 2, students bring a 500 word (hard copy) narrative account on the basis of their diary to class. After discussion of the diary-writing, students will write a 500 word page paper for the next class in which they reflect on what the diary assignment has taught them (week 3). Instructions for the assignment will be given in class.

Midterm exam

The midterm exam, in week 8, examines the key texts that students have read during the first part of the semester. To be well prepared for the midterm exam, students should have completed all the assigned readings, as well as attended the lectures.

Paper proposal

In week 10, a 500 word paper proposal is due, in which students outline their ideas for the final paper – what do they want to study (theme), what do they want to know about this (research questions), where will they focus their attention (case), what will be their source material?

Final paper and presentation

The research paper will be a research paper of 3500 word (includes footnotes and references, +/- 10% in length) on a topic related to sexuality and/or gender and has to have an explicit link to the Netherlands (or Amsterdam). The paper is due in week 15 and will be presented in class during the final session (week 16).

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students are able to:

- Students will be able to articulate concepts in sexuality and gender studies
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of Amsterdam, Dutch sexual cultures and Dutch policies as local research sites

- Students will demonstrate basic interview techniques and gained insight in the sensitive aspects of sexuality research and how to conduct research in a safe and responsible manner
- Students will have improved their capacities of conducting sexuality research as well as evaluating the methods and quality of sexuality research

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Since IES Abroad Amsterdam courses are designed to take advantage of the unique contribution of the instructor and the lecture/discussion format is regarded as the primary mode of instruction, regular class attendance is mandatory. In addition, students are expected to be on time for classes and course-related trips. Excused absence applies in cases of illness (including a doctor's note and compelling circumstances beyond the student's control – missing a flight on the day of class does not fit in this category).

An unexcused will lead to a deduction of your final grade of 0.5 (out of 1-10 scale) point per missed class. If a student shows a pattern in (excused and unexcused) absences, students may be subject to an Academic Review including but not limited to a letter sent to their school and a probationary period or exclusion from the program.

When traveling on the weekends, students are strongly advised to return to Amsterdam on Sunday evening. Travel delays on Monday morning are not accepted as excuse for absence in class and will result in grade deductions as stipulated above.

CONTENT

Week	Content	Assignments
Week 1	Introduction Introduction of the program, its goals, assignments, methods and set up our group meetings.	
Week 2	History of sexuality and gender Lecture: introduction of the historical development of the social meaning of gender and sexuality	Readings: • Mottier, 2008 • Bring 500 word diary to class – we will work in small groups with these excerpts
Week 3	Sexual politics Session on sexual politics in the Netherlands and LGBT and feminist politics during the sexual revolution.	Readings: - Boston & Duyvendak, 2015 - Buikema & Van der Tuin, 2014 • Hand in reflection on diary assignment

Week 4	Postcolonial Netherlands In this session we will discuss postcolonialism in the Netherlands, and the ways in which gender, sexuality and race intersect. The second half of the session we will jointly walk over to the Black Archives, an institute that documents the history of black emancipation movements and individuals in the Netherlands.	
Week 5	Gender and schools This session will explore gender and gender performativity in secondary schools. In this session we will also discuss the final paper: topics, questions, research and writing	Readings: • Butler, 1990 • Alsop, 2002 • Nayak & Kehily, 2006 • Bring to class the quote that you think best summarizes the argument made by Butler (from the 1990 text).
Week 6	Queer issues - past and present Guest lecture: Theo van der Meer will present a historical overview of the relationship between Amsterdam and homosexuality, from the sodomy trials in the 18th century to gay marriage.	Readings: • Van der Meer, 2006
Week 7	Sexual nationalism Session on sexual nationalism, focusing on the role of academic studies on issues such as sexual health and anti-gay violence	Readings: • Krebbekx, Spronk, M'charek, 2017 • Buijs, Hekma, Duyvendak, 2011
Week 8	Midterm exam instructions will be given in class	

Week 9	Guest lecture Alex Bakker (historian and author of the book 'Transgender in the Netherlands') & a Carl Buis of Transvisie (community for transgender folk) will introduce students to the medical and cultural aspects as well as lived experiences of gender dysphoric and transgender people.	• Hand in paper proposal
Week 10	Trans and queer politics Guest lecture: Storm Vogel will discuss queer and trans activism in the Netherlands with us, based on their own experience as well as from their political activities with local political party Bij1.	Readings: • Van den Berg, 2017 • Prepare a question to our tour guide
Week 11	Sex Education This session will explore why the Netherlands is been regarded as a guiding country when it comes to sex education. We will jointly analyze the most widely used sex education curriculum Long Live Love.	Readings: • Lewis & Knijn, 2002 • Schalet, 2004 • Bang Svendsen, 2017
Week 12	Sex work policies and debates We will watch the documentary Meet the Fokkens in class. The film features Louise and Martine Fokkens, twin sisters who have worked in the Amsterdam Red Light District for over 40 years. Drawing on the literature, we will jointly analyze what their life stories tell us about the image of the sex worker, changes in the Red Light District, as well as the acceptance of sex work in the Netherlands.	Readings: • Aalbers & Deinema, 2012 • Vance, 2011

Week 13	Course-related trip: Prostitution Information Center The course-related trip to the PIC (Prostitution Information Center) will acquaint students with the history of Amsterdam's famous and notorious Red Light District. Students will be informed about past and present policies in regards of prostitution, and how these work out in practice for the sex workers and the district. Students will be taken on a walking tour of the Red Light District and learn about its various and diverse parts, rules and norms.	Readings: • Majoor, 2015
Week 14	Questioning tradition, culture and virginity Hymenoplasty, a medical procedure that alters the shape of the hymen membrane, is a contested procedure in the Netherlands. How does it relate to conceptions of sexuality, modesty and femininity? And how do notions of tradition and culture come into play here? This session is based on the research of guest lecturer Sherria Ayuandini.	Readings: • Ayuandini, S., & Duyvendak, J. W., 2018 • Abu Lughod, L., 2002
Week 15	Sexting Session on youth, sexuality, social media and sexting. Based on ethnographic materials from the Netherlands we will question popular and academic accounts on sexting.	Readings: • Naezer, 2017 • Hasinoff, 2014 • Hand in final papers • Prepare paper presentation
Week 16	Presentations & quiz Presentations and discussion of final papers, final quiz (quiz is not graded).	

COURSE-RELATED TRIP:

- Prostitution Information Center

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Aalbers, M.B. & Deinema, M. (2012). 'Placing Prostitution: The spatial–sexual order of Amsterdam and its growth coalition.' in *City, 16* (1-2), 129-145.

- Abu Lughod, L. 2002. 'Do Muslim women really need saving? Anthropological reflections on cultural relativism and its others', *American Anthropologist* **104**, 3: 783–790.
- Alsop, R. (2002). Judith Butler: 'The Queen of Queer.' In: Alsop, R. (Ed.), *Theorizing Gender* (pp. 94-113). Polity Press: Cambridge.
- Ayuandini, S., & Duyvendak, J. W. (2018). Becoming (more) Dutch as medical recommendations: How understandings of national identity enter the medical practice of hymenoplasty consultations. *Nations and Nationalism*, 24(2), 390-411. DOI: [10.1111/nana.12329](https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12329)
- Bang Svendsen, S. H. (2017). The Cultural Politics of Sex Education in the Nordics. In L. Allen & M. L. Rasmussen (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Sexuality Education* (pp. 137–155). Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Boston, N. & Duyvendak, J.W. (2015). People of Color Mobilization in LGBT Movements in the Netherlands and the United States. In: Paternotte, D. & M. Tremblay (eds.). 2015. *The Ashgate Research Companion to Lesbian and Gay Activism*, 135–48.
- Bracke, S. (2012). From "saving women" to "saving gays": Rescue narratives and their dis/continuities. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 19(2), 237–252.
- Buijs, L. Hekma, G. Duyvendak, J.W. (2011). As long as they keep away from me'. The paradox of anti-gay violence in a gay friendly country. *Sexualities*, 14, 6, pp. 632-652
- Buikema, R. & Van der Tuin, I. Three Feminist Waves. Ch 16 (p. 191-202). In: E. Besamusca & J. Verheul (eds.). (2014). *Discovering the Dutch. On Culture and Society of the Netherlands*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press
- Butler, J. (1990). Section 'From interiority to gender performances'. In: *Gender Trouble* (pp. 171- 180). Routledge: New York.
- De Vries, A. 2010. Chapter 1 in: *Gender Dysphoria in Adolescents. Mental Health and Treatment Evaluation*. Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit.
- Hasinoff, A. 2014. Blaming sexualization for sexting. *Girlhood Studies* 7, 1: 102-120
- Krebbekx, W., Spronk, R., M'charek, A. (2017). Ethnicizing sexuality: an analysis of research practices in the Netherlands. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40 (4): 636–55.
- Lewis, J., & Knijn, T. (2002). The politics of sex education policy in England and Wales and the Netherlands since the 1980s. *Journal of Social Policy*, 31(4), 669–694.
- Majoor, M. (2015). Chapter 3 (p. 20-30) in: *When sex becomes work*. Amsterdam: PIC
- Mottier, V. (2008). Chapters 1 & 2 (p. 3-48) in: *Sexuality. A very short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Naezer, M. (2017): From risky behaviour to sexy adventures: reconceptualising young people's online sexual activities. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, onlinefirst
- Nayak, A. & Kehily, M. (2006). Gender undone: subversion, regulation and embodiment in the work of Judith Butler. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 27 (4), 459-472
- Roodsaz, R. & Jansen, W. (2018). Enabling sexual self-fashioning: embracing, rejecting and transgressing modernity among the Iranian Dutch. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Onlinefirst, DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2018.1435993
- Schalet, A. (2004). Must we fear adolescent sexuality? *Medscape General Medicine*, 6(4), 1–18.
- Van der Meer, T. (2007). Sodomy and Its Discontents: Discourse, Desire, and the Rise of a Same- Sex Proto-Something in the Early Modern Dutch Republic. *Historical Reflections*, 33 (1), 41-67
- van Eijk, M. (2014). Ideologies of Self, Suffering, and Gender Nonconformity at Work in a US Gender Identity Clinic. *Medical Anthropology*, 33(6), 497–512.

- Vance, C.S. (2011). States of contradiction: Twelve Ways to do Nothing about Trafficking While Pretending To. *Social Research*, 78, 3, 933-948.
- Van den Berg, M. (2017). Trans Scripts. *Tijdschrift voor Genderstudies*, Vol. 20, Number 4, November 2017, pp. 379-397(19)
- Wekker, G. (2016). Of Homonostalgia and (Post)Coloniality. Chapter 4 in *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race*. Durham: Duke University Press

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Brants, Chrisje. (1998) The Fine Art of Regulated Tolerance: Prostitution in Amsterdam. *Journal of Law and Society*, 25, 621-635.
- Davis, Benjamin. "Effects of Standardization on Cultural Identity and Community Involvement: Transgender Clients at the Vrije Universiteit Gender Clinic." (2007).
- Hubbard, P., Matthews, R., and Scoular, J. Regulating Sex Work in the EU: Prostitute Women and the New Spaces of Exclusion. *Gender, Place and Culture*: Vol.15, 2. 2008.
- Jagose, Annamari, *Queer Theory. An introduction*. New York University Press, New York, 1996.
- Mepschen, P., Duyvendak, J.W., Tonkens, E. (2010). Sexual Politics, Orientalism and Multicultural Citizenship in the Netherlands. *Sociology*, 44, 5, 962-977.
- Proctor, A., A. Krumeich, and A. Meershoek. 2011. "Making a Difference: The Construction of Ethnicity in HIV and STI Epidemiological Research by the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM)." *Social Science & Medicine*, 72(11), 1838–1845.
- Rubin, G. *Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality*
- Van den Bongardt, D., Bos, H., Moutaen, I. 2013. Sexual and relational education practices in the Netherlands: Evidence of a discourse of erotics? *Society for International Education Journal*, 7 (1), 76-104.
- Wekker, Gloria. 2006. *The Politics of Passion*. New York: Columbia University Press
- Wijers, Marjan. "Prostitution Policies in the Netherlands." International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe. 2008.+
- Yildiz, A. 2016. Turkish, Dutch, Gay and Proud: Mapping out the Contours of Agency in Homonationalist Times. *Sexualities*: 1–16.