

# QUEER POLITICS & POLICY

POLITICAL SCIENCE 346 (001C) | 3 CREDITS

FALL 2022 | T/TH 11:30–1:00 | SAGE 4224

POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN OSHKOSH

---

## PROFESSOR

Jerry D. Thomas

Pronouns: he/him/his (for now)

[thomasj@uwosh.edu](mailto:thomasj@uwosh.edu)

J.D., Chicago-Kent College of Law

Ph.D., University of Kentucky

M.P.A., University of South Carolina

---

## OFFICE HOURS

My office is Sage 4628. I am available during office hours MWF 11:30–12:30 or by appointment.

---

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

What role does sexual identity play in American politics? In what ways has domestic politics shaped the U.S. LGBT community? In this course, we will debate the meaning of sexual identity and ideologies and explore how they have been viewed throughout American history. Next we will examine the impact of sexual identity on public opinion and political participants, particularly candidates and officeholders. We will look at the unique experiences of LGBT groups in the U.S., and consider the relationships between sexual identity, race, class, and gender. Finally, we will look at the relationship between sexual identity and public policy, particularly: same-sex marriage, adoption rights, anti-sodomy laws, and hate crimes legislation.

There are no prerequisites for this course.

---

## TEXTBOOK AND READINGS

*LGBTQ Politics: A Critical Reader* (2017) edited by Marla Brettschneider, Susan Burgess, and Christine Keating  
ISBN: 978-1-4798-3409-9

This textbook is required. In addition to the textbook, there are a number of other required readings that will be available electronically at no additional cost to students.

---

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Distinguish LGB studies from queer studies and apply respective theories to contemporary sexual politics
2. Analyze queer issues through the lenses of legal and political theory
3. Summarize main events and theories in LGBTQ political movements in the U.S. from 1969 to present
4. Identify legal and political issues in contemporary queer policymaking

This course also emphasizes several political science department learning objectives: (1) oral and written communication, (2) critical thinking, and (3) theory (political and legal)

---

## INCLUSION

Law and politics affect all people irrespective of political affiliation, socio-economic status, gender, sex, race, sexuality, national origin, ethnicity, veteran status, religion, physical or learning ability, and other characteristics with which students commonly identify. So, I use inclusive pedagogies to foster input from everyone. *Input from all students is valued and expected.*

---

## FREEDOM OF SPEECH

My classes are free speech zones. Say what you want to say. No topic or viewpoint is off limits. Exercising freedom of speech carries the burden of being responsible for your speech. Similarly, exercising silence carries the burden of being responsible for your silence.

---

## ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

I use the 93/90/87 grading scale for this course.

A 93–100   B 83–86   C 73–76   D 63–66  
A- 90–92   B- 80–82   C- 70–72   D- 60–62  
B+ 87–89   C+ 77–79   D+ 67–69   F 0–59

Grades are based on the following elements.

### Participation (35%)

Participation is based on student preparation for and contributions to class. Minimally, students must attend class and must read and prepare course materials before coming to class. Participation comfort levels vary substantially. At one end of the spectrum are *deathers*—students who fear public speaking (more than death) and prefer to remain anonymous in class. These students should work actively to overcome this fear. On the other end of the spectrum are *gunners*. Gunners are eager to speak and tend to dominate conversation. These students should be mindful that learning involves active listening and should provide others an opportunity to speak. Quality of participation is as important as quantity. Students receive the best participation grades when they demonstrate critical thinking and assimilate complex ideas, including classmates' ideas, across a range of topics. These participators contribute meaningfully to the learning of others, including the professor. Students write a reflection at the end of the term assessing their own participation, both strengths and challenges.

### Short Papers (35%)

Students submit eight short papers (two pages) during the term. Papers are reactions, reflections, or research. The purposes of the papers are to (1) prepare students for class discussions and (2) have students write, write, write. Writing guidelines will be distributed during class.

### Final Exam (30%)

The final exam asks students to write well-informed essays about queer politics and policy. The best exams will incorporate and reference class material.

---

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance is expected and required. I take attendance at the beginning of class, mainly to learn student names. Because participation in discussions and activities is required, you should remember that you cannot participate if you are absent. Absences are sometimes necessary, but it is unnecessary to contact me about absences unless it is an extended absence.

---

## DEADLINES AND MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Turn in assignments on the due dates. Students who miss assignments will be excused only for university-approved reasons (e.g., documented illness, family death, university-sponsored activity).

---

## EARLY ALERT

During the fifth week of classes, you will receive by e-mail notice about your progress in this course. This is called *Early Alert*. Early Alert helps you evaluate your study skills and class attendance so you know if you are on the right track. If you need to make changes, there are tons of resources available. Early Alert grades are not permanent and do not appear on your transcript.

---

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Expectations for Academic Honesty: A college education is intended to develop your skills, knowledge, and confidence. Graded assignments are designed to work on these items. Thus, to gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence of a college-educated person all graded work is to be your own. When you are directed to work alone, an assignment or test must be done by you, its primary ideas are to be your own, and any outside materials should be dealt with properly (quoted when using someone's words, and cited when quoting or referencing them in any other way). When your teacher directs you to work in teams, the work is to be done by the team. More information can be found [here](#).

UWO is committed to academic integrity for all students. System guidelines state, "Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors." We expect students to review and adhere to procedures related to academic honesty as outlined in Chapter UWS 14, Wisconsin Administrative Code, available on the Dean of Students website [here](#). Students should direct specific questions regarding the code (and institutional procedures approved to implement the code) to the Dean of Students Office.

---

## STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION

Students should see the following URL for disclosures about essential consumer protection items required by the Students Right to Know Act of 1990 available [here](#).

---

## NOTE TO POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJORS

Political Science majors should take Political Methodology (245) in either their sophomore or first semester of their junior year. PS245 is a prerequisite for the senior capstone, Political Analysis (401), and cannot be taken concurrently.

---

## ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

UWO provides reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or meet course requirements. We accommodate *flexibly* and *individually*. Register with *Accessibility Services* or Project Success to get an accommodation recommendation form.

**Accessibility Services**  
125 Dempsey Hall  
(920) 424-3100  
dean1@uwosh.edu  
[Accessibility Services Website](#)

---

## GRIEVANCES

The Department of Political Science is committed to offering you a high-quality classroom experience, and we take your feedback seriously. If you have concerns about anything related to this course, assignments, or teaching method, you are encouraged to first speak with your instructor directly. If you are not comfortable speaking with the instructor, you are invited to speak with the Chair of the Department of Political Science, Dr. James Krueger. He can be reached at [kruegerj@uwosh.edu](mailto:kruegerj@uwosh.edu). Should he be unable to resolve your concerns, he will guide you to appropriate resources within the College of Letters and Science.

---

## REGISTER TO VOTE (AND VOTE)

This is a political science class, and I encourage everyone to participate in our democracy. Minimally, voting is a great start. *National Election Day this year is Tuesday, November 8.*

### Wisconsin Registration Methods & Deadlines

- *In Person:* The Friday before Election Day
- *By Mail:* Postmarked at least 20 days before Election Day
- *Online:* 20 days before Election Day (<https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/>)
- *At the Polls:* Individuals may register to vote in person at your polling place on Election Day. You must provide documents for proof of residency and proof of identification.

Twenty days before Election Day this year is October 19. Other Wisconsin voting information can be found at [MyVoteWisconsin](https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/).

### Other States

Students who live in other states can easily find out how to vote with a little bit of online research. Every state has an option for submitting an absentee ballot, and many states have early, in-person voting if you make a trip home. A great starting place for your research is [Vote.org](https://www.vote.org/).

### Assistance

There are many “voter drives” occurring on campus this semester. If you need help, ask a volunteer during one of these events. Or, ask me. I am happy, happy, happy to help.

---

## SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Changes to the schedule are inevitable and will be communicated in class or through e-mail. If substantive changes are made, notification will be provided in a timely manner and a revised syllabus made available.

### Week 1 (Sept 5): Intro & Discourse

- Introductions and course overview
- Labels, terms, vocabulary, pronouns, LGBTQIA+ and diverse SOGIESCs (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics)
- Safe and brave spaces
- Free speech, expressive conduct, censorship, obscenity, and pushing boundaries in public university classrooms
- Title IX and mandatory reporting

### Week 2 (Sept 12): Campus Climate

- Campus Resources: LGBTQ+ Resource Center, Faculty and Staff (Pink Triangles), Student Groups, LGBTQ Education & Advocacy Council

- [UWO Educational Values of Students of Diverse Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities](#)
- Writing Guidelines for Papers  
First Paper: LGBTQ+ Personal Experiences & Knowledge
- Question to ponder during the course: *Thinking about erasure and inclusivity, should the goal for an imagined utopia be to get rid of gender or create more genders?*

### Week 3 (Sept 19): Sex, Gender & Feminisms

- UNITED Training (formerly SAFE Training), Maddie Wiles, LGBTQ+ Resource Center
- Discussion: *Are feminist studies the foundation of LGBTQ Studies and Queer Theory?*
- [7 Types of Feminism: A Brief History of Feminism](#)
- Josephson, Jyl and Thais Marques. 2017. “Unfulfilled Promises: How Queer Feminist Political Theory Could Transform Political Science” in *LGBTQ Politics* (ch 13)
- Eichner, Maxine. 2009. “Feminism, Queer Theory & Sexual Citizenship” in Linda C. McClain and Joanna L. Grossman (eds), *Gender Equality: Dimensions of Women’s Equal Citizenship*. (Canvas)

### Week 4 (Sept 26): Equal Protection, Sexual Liberty, and Privacy

- *Romer v. Evans* (Canvas)
- *Lawrence v. Texas* (Canvas)
- Carpenter, Dale. 2004. “The Unknown Past of *Lawrence v. Texas*,” 102 *Mich. Law Review* 1464 (Canvas)
- Lecture: Right of Privacy (*Griswold v. Connecticut*, *Roe v. Wade*, *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, *Dobbs*)
- Panel Discussion: *A Post-Roe World* (Thursday, Sept. 29, Location TBD)

### Week 5 (Oct 3): Queer Theory & Politics

- Brettschneider, Marla. 2011. “Heterosexual Political Science,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44(1) (Canvas)
- Smith, Nicola J. and Donna Lee. 2015. “What’s Queer about Political Science?” *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 17(1). (Canvas)
- Halperin, David M. 2003. “The Normalization of Queer Theory.” *Journal of Homosexuality*, 45:2-4, 339–343 (Canvas)
- Dilley, Patrick. 1999 “Queer Theory: Under Construction.” *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 12:5, 457–72 (a bit heady, but spot-on re: theory and praxis) (Canvas)
- Thomas, Queer J. 2017. “Constructing Queer Theory in Political Science and Public Law: Sexual Citizenship, Outspeech, and Queer Narrative.” *New Political Science* 39(4):568–87 (optional, paper copy distributed during class)
- *Queer Core: How to Punk a Revolution* “chronicles the cultural phenomenon known as Queercore, tracing its underground origins in the 80’s as a punk subculture aimed at radical artistic and political expression, and its growth into a global activist movement for queer youth . . . [It] documents the beginning of the pseudo-movement through the rise of pop artists who used queer identity to push back against gay assimilation and homophobic punk culture” (description from film [website](#)) (Canvas)

### Week 6 (Oct 10): Queer Representation

- Perry, Ravi K. and X. Loudon Manley. 2017. “Case Studies of Black Lesbian and Gay Candidates: Winning Identity Politics in the Obama Era” in *LGBTQ Politics* (ch 16)
- Snell, Paul. 2017. “Equality in the House: The Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus and the Substantive Representation of LGBTQ Interests” in *LGBTQ Politics* (ch 17)

- Bailey, Mandi Bates and Steven P. Nawara. 2017. “Gay and Lesbian Candidates, Group Stereotypes, and the News Media: An Experimental Design” in *LGBTQ Politics* (ch 18)
- Donald Haider-Markel, Patrick Miller, Andrew Flores, Daniel C. Lewis, Barry Tadlock & Jami Taylor. 2017. “Bringing “T” to the Table: Understanding Individual Support of Transgender Candidates for Public Office.” *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 5 (3): 399–417 (Canvas)
- Kammerer Jr., Edward F. and Melissa R. Michelson. 2022. “You Better Vote: Drag Performers and Voter Mobilization in the 2020 Election.” *PS: Political Science and Politics*, published online, 1–6 (Canvas)
- Research and Discussions
  - Openly queer elected officials, including Wisconsin
  - Contemporary queer politics and the 2022 elections

### **Week 7 (Oct 17): Bisexuality**

- Abes, Elisa S. 2008. “Applying Queer Theory in Practice with College Students.” *Journal of LGBT Youth*, 5:1, 57-77 (lesbian with a bisexual fetish) (Canvas)
- Smith, Charles Anthony, Shawn Schulenberg, and Eric A. Baldwin. 2017. “The “B” Isn’t Silent: Bisexual Communities and Political Activism” in *LGBTQ Politics* (ch. 6)
- Yoshino, Kenji. 2000. “The Epistemic Contract of Bisexual Erasure,” 52 *Stanford Law Review* 353 (Introduction in Canvas)
- Research and Discussion: *Why is the number of people who identify as bisexual increasing? Is this political?*

### **Week 8 (Oct 24): Transgender & Enby Politics**

- Aultman, B. Lee and Paisley Currah. 2017. “Politics Outside the Law: Transgender Lives and the Challenge of Legibility” in *LGBTQ Politics* (ch. 3)
- Davis, Heath Fogg. 2017. “Single-Sex Colleges and Transgender Discrimination: The Politics of Checking a “Male” or “Female” Box to Get into College” in *LGBTQ Politics* (ch. 30)
- West, Isaac. 2014. *Transforming Citizenships: Transgender Articulations of the Law* (Introduction, pp. 1–35) (Canvas)
- [Utah Judge Reverses Law Banning Transgender Kids from Sports](#) and related video, CBS News
- Research and Discussion: *Beyond Bathrooms—Military Service, Healthcare, Athletics, and Other Issues*

### **Week 9 (Oct 30): HIV and AIDS Politics**

- Price, Ricky J. 2017. “The Treatment and Prevention of HIV Bodies: The Contemporary Politics and Science of a Thirty-Year-Old Epidemic” in *LGBTQ Politics* (ch. 4)
- Wojnarowicz, David (readings and documentary excerpts TBD)
- Other Readings TBD
- Research and Discussion: *Contemporary AIDS Issues: medical, political, social*

### **Week 10 (Nov 7): Politics of Queers in Film & Television**

- Remember, Election Day is Tuesday, November 8
- *Celluloid Closet* (documentary available free online [here](#))
- *Interior. Leather Bar.* (film)
- Thomas, Queer J. 2019. “Fuck-Scripting: Becoming-Queer in *Interior. Leather Bar.*” in *Queer/Adaptation* (ed. Pamela Demory) (Canvas)
- Research and Discussion: Contemporary Queer Characters in Film and Television

### **Week 11 (Nov 14): Marriage**

- *U.S. v. Windsor* (Canvas)
- Daum, Courtenay W. 2017. “Marriage Equality: Assimilationist Victory or Pluralist Defeat?” in *LGBTQ Politics* (ch. 19)
- Thomas, Jerry D. 2017. “Queer Sensibilities and Other Fagchild Tools” in *LGBTQ Politics* (ch 21)
- Snyder, R. Claire. 2006. “What Does Same-Sex Marriage Have to Do with Democracy” in *Gay Marriage and Democracy: Equality for All*, 1–14 (Canvas)

### **Week 12 (Nov 21): Freedom of Association**

- *Hurley v. Irish American GLB* (Canvas)
- *Boy Scouts of American v. Dale* (Canvas)
- Lecture: *Rumsfeld v. FAIR* and cases involving queer university groups in the 1980s
  
- Thanksgiving Break: Nov 23–27

### **Week 13 (Nov 28): Sexual Expression and Public Opinion**

- *Fricke v. Lynch* (Canvas)
- *Miller* Test: Obscenity and SLAPs value (Canvas)
- *Howl* (passage from Allen Ginsburg’s famous poem) and *Howl* (movie clip of Franco as Ginsburg)
  
- Garretson, Jeremiah J. 2017. “The How, Why, and Who of LGBTQ “Victory”: A Critical Examination of Change in Public Attitudes Involving LGBTQ People” in *LGBTQ Politics* (ch. 14)
- Haider-Markel, Donald P. and Patrick R. Miller. 2017. “Equality or Transformation? LGBT Political Attitudes and Priorities and the Implications for the Movement” in *LGBTQ Politics* (ch 15)
- Flores, Andrew. (various articles TBD)

### **Week 14 (Dec 5): What’s Queer about Race?**

- Ford, Richard Thompson. 2007. “What’s Queer about Race?” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 106(3) (Canvas)
- Harris, Angela P. 1990. “Race and Essentialism in Feminist Legal Theory,” *Stanford Law Review* 42(3) (Canvas)
- Thomas, Queer J. 2018. Review of Vanessa R. Panfil, *The Gang’s All Queer: The Lives of Gay Gang Members* (2017) in *Politics & Gender* 14(4) (Canvas)
- Other Readings TBD
- Lecture: *Vulnerable White Men and Sexual Citizenship: Charles Ray Sculptures*

### **Week 15 (Dec 12): Final Assessments**

- Review, Exam, Course Evaluations, and Reflections