LGBT rights is a topic of intense debate in today’s international politics. Together with women’s rights, sexual freedom is considered one of the most important indicators for societies’ belonging to the “developed” world. The prevailing ideological dichotomy identifies the West as a gay-friendly space, and the Arab Middle East as an extremely homophobic one. In most cases, both LGBT activists and their opponents regard sexual toleration as part of the Western influence on the world.

However, only a few decades ago, the situation was completely different. In the beginning of the 20th century, homosexuality was a taboo in Europe; meanwhile, artists and authors would travel to the Middle East and North Africa, especially to Morocco, Algeria and Egypt, to realize their passion for men. As noted by Edward Said, in modern colonial discourse, a clear association was made between the Orient and unlimited sexual freedom. Sex between men was described as an expression of oriental men’s excessive and unbridled sexuality. Ironically, while in the past, the West condemned the Muslim world’s alleged sexual licentiousness, the modern West today criticizes the Muslim repression of sexual freedoms.

The course will tackle those questions from a historical perspective. Applying methodologies of queer theory, it will discuss the complex history of sexuality in the Middle East, and sketch the genealogy of Western attitudes towards both Arab and Jewish sexuality. Relying on theorists and historians like Michel Foucault, Robert Aldrich, Khaled El-Rouayheb, Samar Habib, and Joseph Massad, we will explore the essential role that the queer issue plays in the contemporary politics of the region.
### Assessment Components

- 30% four two-page reports on the weekly readings
- 20% one 20-minutes oral presentation
- 50% final project (10-15 pages)

### Grade Conversion

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<tr>
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<td>F</td>
<td>below 65</td>
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</table>

### Grading Policy

Class attendance at NYU Tel Aviv is mandatory, and **unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade**. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

All medical-based absence requests MUST be presented to the Program Coordinator. Non-medical requests should be made to the Director and in advance of the intended absence. In the case of illness, contact the Program Coordinator within seven (7) days of the absence or as soon as practicable and provide medical documentation. Your instructors will be informed of any excused extended absence.

Your instructors are not authorized to approve your absence, and they are required to report any absences to the Director or Assistant Director immediately. Unexcused absences will be penalized by deducting 3% from your final course mark for each such absence. This may affect your final grade.

All works must be submitted on time, unless you have received an explicit extension. Any late submission may result in grade deduction at the sole discretion of the instructor.

Plagiarism: the presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.
It is hard to overestimate the importance of the internet, or its contribution, to the build up of contemporary knowledge of the world around us. Albeit it needs to be used wisely. This means that one must be selective and careful when relating to internet-based sources, identifying and distinguishing opinions from facts, and journalism from academics. Most importantly, one should make clear reference to internet sources, allowing the reader the opportunity to consult these resources as and if required.

Please also note that the ‘world-wide web’ – www – exists in many languages. Many sources about Israel in English, for instance, will be aimed at tourists or readers living primarily in English-speaking regions of the world. Sources might differ when reading them in other languages. Use the internet critically.

You can never be too safe, so do ensure both the reader and yourself that you know well what your internet sources are.

**Required Text(s)**

**Supplemental Texts(s) (not required to purchase as copies are in NYU-L Library)**

**Internet Research Guidelines**

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**Additional Required Equipment**

**Session 1**

**Introduction: How to Make Queer History?**

[Enter date]

Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality* I, pp. 51-74


**Session 2**

**Conceptions of Sexuality in the Pre-Modern Arab World (I)**

[Enter date]


**Session 3**

**Conceptions of Sexuality in the Pre-Modern Arab World (II)**


**Optional:**

Everett K. Rowson, “Homoerotic Liaisons among the Mamluk Elite in Late Medieval Egypt and Syria”, in Babayan & Najmabadi (eds.) *Islamicate Sexualities: Translations across Temporal Geographies of Desire*, pp. 204-38

Amanullah de Sondy, *The Crisis of Islamic Masculinities*, pp. 9-17

**Session 4**

“Arab Sexuality” and the Orientalist Imagination: The Seduction of the Harem
Session 5

“Arab Sexuality” and the Orientalist Imagination: “The Oriental Vice”

[Enter date]

Robert Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, pp. 23-55

Optional:

Session 6

Modernization and Sexual Reform

[Enter date]
George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in Modern Europe*, chapter 2

Joseph A. Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, pp. 1-50

Momin Rahman, *Homosexualities, Muslim Cultures and Modernity*, pp. 70-92

Optional:

Session 7

Colonialism, Anti-Colonialism and Desire

[Enter date]
Robert Aldrich, “T. E. Lawrence and Dahoum”, in *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, pp. 71-80

Michael Berkovitz, “Rejecting Zion, Embracing the Orient: The Life and Death of Jacob Israel De Haan”, in Kalmar & Penslar (eds), *Orientalism and the Jews*, pp. 109-24

Session 8

Queer Life in Contemporary Middle East

[Enter date]


Farrah Jafari, “Transsexuality under Surveillance in Iran: Clerical Control of Khomeini’s Fatwas” *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Spring 2014), pp. 31-51

Optional:
Brian Whitaker, *Unspeakable Love: Gay and Lesbian Life in the Middle East*, pp. 47-76

Session 9

Zionism and Sexuality


**Session 10**

**Women Rights, Feminism and Lesbian Struggle**


**Session 11**

**Gay Icons, Social Media and the Construction of Sexual Identities**


Optional:

Grant Walsh-Haines, “The Egyptian Blogosphere: Policing Gender and Sexuality and the Consequences for Queer Emancipation”, Journal of Middle East Women's Studies, Vol. 8, No. 3, (Fall 2012), pp. 41-62

Sofian Merabet, “‘Seeing Oneself’ and the Mirror Stage: The Hammam and the Gay Icon Fairuz”, in: Queer Beirut, pp. 187-210

**Session 12**

**The Queer Arab: Cinematic Representations**

Remi Lange, Tarik El Hob (2001)


**Session 13**

“A Gay Haven”? Pinkwashing and its Opponents

Jasbir Puar, Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times, pp. 203-23

Sarah Schulman, Israel/Palestine and the Queer International, pp. 179-87

Optional:


**Session 14**

**Concluding Session: Queer Walking Tour in Tel Aviv**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom Etiquette</th>
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<tr>
<td>Required Co-curricular Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Co-curricular Activities</td>
</tr>
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Your Instructor