IN THIS GRADUATE COURSE, YOU WILL:

• Understand the difference between paranoid and reparative reading practices, and implement both in your analyses of queer YA texts.

• Understand the complex relationship between queer content and form, and explore the extent to which LGBTQ+ novels necessitate innovative and experimental modes of narration and storytelling.

• Explore the emotional/affective dimensions of queer YA literature, and understand the sociocultural politics of emotion in these texts.

• Become familiar with different strands of queer theory that draw from social and antisocial traditions, and explore the overlaps between queer theory and other areas of theoretical and cultural inquiry.

• Engage with theorizations of the queer child and adolescent, and determine how contemporary young adult fiction “queers” our understanding of these developmental categories.

• Generate rigorous and thoughtful scholarship that makes a clear intervention in the field of queer YA literature.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Professor
Dr. Angel Daniel Matos

Contact Information
amatos@sdsu.edu
(619) 594-5442

Office Hours
My office is located in Arts and Letters, 217. Please click HERE to book an appointment with me. Office hours are available on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.
COURSE TEXTS

You are expected to purchase copies of the following novels and bring them to class when they are assigned. You are free to purchase hardcover, paperback, or ebook versions of these texts:


**Additional Readings**

Primary texts will be paired with additional secondary readings that will be uploaded to Blackboard. Many of these secondary texts are notoriously dense and difficult—so be prepared to read these texts multiple times! If you are having difficulties in reading or understanding these texts, please arrange study groups with your peers, or visit me during office hours for a one-on-one consultation. Furthermore, come to class with questions, concerns, and crises that surfaced when reading these texts!

**Technology in the Classroom**

Laptops and tablets are allowed in the classroom as long as they don't interfere with your participation and engagement in class discussions.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

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<tr>
<th>Evaluation Components</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference Paper Abstract</td>
<td>100 (10%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference Paper and Presentation</td>
<td>600 (60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Performance</td>
<td>300 (30%)</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL: 1,000 (100%)</strong></td>
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**GRADING SCALE**

- **A** = 100-95%
- **B** = 87-83%
- **C** = 77-73%
- **A-** = 94-90%
- **B-** = 82-80%
- **C-** = 72-70%
- **B+** = 89-88%
- **C+** = 79-78%
- **F** = 69-0%

**Conference Paper Abstract**: You will develop an abstract for an academic conference paper that you will present at the end of the semester. You will learn how to effectively contextualize your research and develop an abstract that conveys a clear sense of your essay’s argument, stakes, importance, and contributions to the field.

**Conference Paper and Presentation**: In lieu of a seminar paper, you will be expected to produce a 7-8-page conference paper that you will formally present during the last weeks of class. This paper will focus on 1-2 YA novels assigned for this course, and you will draw from various secondary sources to support your claims. Each paper presentation will be followed by a brief Q&A session. After presenting your paper at our in-class conference, you will be given the opportunity to expand your paper into a longer, 10-page paper that will be submitted during the allotted final exam period.

**Class Performance**: This class will be driven by collaborative discussions and workshops. It is crucial that you read for and participate in every class. During every meeting, you will be responsible for: a) Sharing your impressions and interpretations of course texts; b) Asking and answering questions that will generate effective critical discussions; c) Selecting passages that you would like to discuss in class; d) Leading class discussions; e) Listening carefully to your peers, allowing them to express their ideas fully before (dis)agreeing with them or mobilizing a counterargument; and f) Making sure that your ideas and conversations do not deviate from the texts that we are examining. Do not be that student who relies entirely on the discourse that other people produce without generating any insights of your own. Do not be surprised if I ask you questions if you are being unusually quiet. If you are uncomfortable speaking in class, please meet with me so I can help you to develop strategies on how to effectively participate in class conversations. Last but not least, be respectful to everyone in the classroom—you can disagree with someone without attacking them.
DETAILED COURSE SCHEDULE

UNIT I: INTRODUCTION
An overview of queer studies/theory and a discussion of the first queer YA novel. We will explore the concepts of reparative and paranoid reading, and think carefully about the benefits and detriments of reading a YA text reparatively.

Week 1 - Thursday, January 24
• Focal Texts: Meg-John Barker and Julia Scheele’s *Queer: A Graphic History* and excerpts from John Donovan’s *I’ll Get There. It Better Be Worth the Trip*.
• Secondary Reading: Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s “Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading, or, You’re So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Essay is About You.”

UNIT II: THE POTENTIALITIES AND PARADOXES OF QUEER HISTORICAL NARRATIVES
In this unit, we will explore the challenges of representing queer characters in historical settings, and we will debate the potential benefits of imbuing a historical narrative with contemporary ideologies, attitudes, and sensibilities.

Week 2 - Thursday, January 31
• Focal Text: Selection of short stories from Saundra Mitchell’s *All Out: The No-Longer Secret Stories of Queer Teens Throughout the Ages*.
• Secondary Readings: Mike Cadden’s “The Irony of Narration in the Young Adult Novel” and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s “Queer and Now” from *Tendencies*.

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES

ABSENCES
Attendance to class is compulsory, and you are expected to arrive in a timely fashion. You are responsible for all of the material that was discussed on days that you’re absent. Given that this is a graduate seminar, you will be granted one “free pass” during the semester, meaning that you will receive no penalties towards your final grade if you miss one class. For each additional absence over the first, excused or otherwise, you will receive a 50 point deduction from your participation score. If you have four or more absences, you will receive a score of zero (0) in your class performance score. It is your responsibility to notify me if you arrived late to class. In the case of a prolonged illness or issue, please contact me as soon as possible.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
The intentional, uncredited use of another person’s work is a serious offense that won’t be taken lightly in this course. If I determine that you plagiarized any of the work that you turn in for this class, you will automatically receive an F (0%) for that assignment. If the act of plagiarism is serious, you will be reported to the Judicial Board Advisor at the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs. For more on plagiarism, please click here.

ASSIGNMENTS, EXTENSIONS, ETC.
All assignments must be turned in personally by the established due date and in the requested format. In terms of late assignments, one letter grade will be dropped for every day of lateness that passes, including weekends. If you need an extension for an assignment, you must contact me at least three days before the established deadline. No “Incomplete” grades will be given for this course, unless you are facing a serious, unprecedented issue.
# UNIT II: THE POTENTIALITIES AND PARADOXES OF QUEER HISTORICAL NARRATIVES

In this unit, we will explore the challenges of representing queer characters in historical settings, and we will debate the potential benefits of imbuing a historical narrative with contemporary ideologies, attitudes, and sensibilities.

**Week 3 - Thursday, February 7**
- **Focal Text**: Benjamin Alire Sáenz’s *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*
- **Secondary Readings**: Afterword to McKenzie Lee’s *The Gentleman’s Guide to Vice and Virtue*; Angel D. Matos’ “A Narrative of a Future Past: Historical Authenticity, Contemporary Ethical Engagement, and Queer Latinx Narrative in *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*.”

## UNIT III: THE POLITICS OF EMOTION AND AFFECT IN QUEER YA NARRATIVES

Why do YA novels place so much importance on emotion and affect? To what extent can emotion be approached from a queer perspective? In this unit, we will explore the political and cultural viability of affect in queer YA novels. We will also examine and interrogate notions such as happiness, sadness, fear, loss, and shame as represented in these texts.

**Week 4 - Thursday, February 14**
- **Focal Text**: Nina LaCour’s *We Are Okay*
- **Secondary Readings**: Sara Ahmed’s “Queer Feelings,” from *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*; Lauren Berlant’s “Intimacy”; Ann Cvetkovich’s “Affect,” from *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*.

**Week 5 - Thursday, February 21**
- **Focal Text**: David Levithan’s *Two Boys Kissing*
- **Secondary Readings**: Introduction to Heather Love’s *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History*; Angel Daniel Matos’ “‘One the Other Never Leaving’: Queer Consciousness/Community in David Levithan’s *Two Boys Kissing*.”

## UNIT IV: QUEER RETELLINGS AND ADAPTATIONS

Recently in the field of queer YA literature, there has been much emphasis on retellings and adaptations—taking stories that we are familiar with and giving them a queer twist. In this unit, we will examine three texts that were inspired by other literary works, and we will determine the cultural and political work that these texts accomplish. What type of affective, cultural, and political nourishment do young readers get from these texts? Why is this nourishment important?

**Week 6 - Thursday, February 28**
- **Focal Text**: Rainbow Rowell’s *Carry On*

**Week 7 - Thursday, March 7**
- **Focal Text**: Alex London’s *Proxy*
- **Secondary Readings**: Wendy Pearson’s “Science Fiction and Queer Theory” and excerpts from Sid Fleischman’s *The Whipping Boy*.

**Week 8 - Thursday, March 14**
- **Focal Text**: Patrick Ness’ *Release*
- **Secondary Readings**: Sara Ahmed’s “Unhappy Queers” from *The Promise of Happiness*.; Derritt Mason’s “The Earnest Elfin Dream Gay.”
## UNIT V: BEYOND BINARIES

In this unit, we will focus our attention on texts that challenge and disrupt binary thinking, and that focus on the experiences of trans, nonbinary, and two-spirit characters. Furthermore, the texts that we will examine in this unit challenge divides that are commonly upheld in academic contexts, such as divides between genres and fields.

### Week 9 - Thursday, March 21
- **Focal Text:** Anna Marie McLemore's *When the Moon Was Ours*
- **Secondary Readings:** Kyla Wazana Tompkin's “Intersections of Race, Gender, and Sexuality: Queer of Color Critique,” Brie Owen’s “Adolescence” from *Transgender Studies Quarterly*.

### Week 10 - Thursday, March 28
- **Focal Text:** Joshua Whitehead's *Jonny Appleseed*
- **Secondary Readings:** Qwo-Li Driskill's “Doubleweaving Two-Spirit Critiques: Building Alliances between Native and Queer Studies;” Leah Devun and Zeb Tortorici's “Trans, Time, and History.”

**CONFERENCE ABSTRACT MUST BE UPLOADED TO BLACKBOARD BY MIDNIGHT ON MARCH 29, 2019.**

## UNIT VI: QUEER FUTURITIES AND TEMPORALITIES

In the final unit of our course, we will discuss queer futurities and temporalities, and further interrogate the relationship between bodies, sexuality, identity, and time. To what extent does time influence the way we think about gender, sexuality, and identity? To what extent is queerness approached as complementary or oppositional to the future? What does it mean to think queerly about the future, and how can YA novels push us to think differently and non-normatively about time and futurity?

### Week 11 - Thursday, April 11
- **Focal Text:** Andrew Smith’s *Grasshopper Jungle*
- **Secondary Readings:** J. Halberstam’s “Queer Temporality and Postmodern Geographies” and Lee Edelman’s “The Future is Kid Stuff.”

### Week 12 - Thursday, April 18
- **Focal Text:** Adam Silvera’s *They Both Die at the End*
- **Secondary Reading:** Introduction to José Esteban Muñoz's *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*.

**IN-CLASS CONFERENCE**

For the last weeks of class, we will be holding an in-class conference. All of you will be presenting a formal 8-page conference paper to your peers, and you will receive robust feedback from me and your peers.

### Week 13 - Thursday, April 25
- First day of in-class conference. 6 graduate students will present today.

### Week 14 - Thursday, May 2
- Second day of in-class conference. 6 graduate students will present today.

### Week 15 - Thursday, May 9
- NO CLASS. We will identify an alternative date for the last day of the in-class conference.

**FINAL CONFERENCE PAPERS MUST BE UPLOADED TO BLACKBOARD BY MIDNIGHT ON MAY 15, 2019.**