

JSU237: Introduction to HIV/AIDS: Health, Sexuality & Gender Winter 2021

Online (Zoom): Thursdays, 10:10 am –1:00 pm

Course Coordinator:

Scott Rayter (He/Him) Associate Professor, Teaching Stream
Sexual Diversity Studies/Department of English
scott.rayter@utoronto.ca

Course Instructors:

Rodney Rousseau (He/Him)
Postgraduate, Wadham College, University of Oxford
PhD in Immunology (2020), University of Toronto
r.rousseau@mail.utoronto.ca
backup email: rodney.rousseau@wadham.ox.ac.uk

Mark Gaspar (He/Him) Post-Doctoral Fellow, Dalla Lana School of Public Health
mark.gaspar@utoronto.ca

Teaching Assistants:

Brigid Burke, PhD Candidate, Dept of Sociology
b.burke@mail.utoronto.ca

Tola Mbulaheni, PhD Candidate, Dalla Lana School of Public Health
tola.mbulaheni@mail.utoronto.ca

*****Please use EMAIL and NOT Quercus Inbox for contacting instructors*****

Office Hours:

We will seldom go the full three hours, so you will have time to speak to us after lecture, and we can usually hang around for a bit afterwards (for people who don't have another class right after). Otherwise by appointment instead of a general weekly drop-in session, which would be open to everyone and you might have to wait a while.

Course Description:

This course examines the HIV/AIDS pandemic from a multidisciplinary perspective. The course will cover the basic biology of HIV/AIDS and then explore the social, historical, political, cultural, and public health dimensions of HIV/AIDS. Particular attention is given to the themes of vulnerability, marginalization, prevention, treatment, drug development, and access to medicines. In addition, we will examine a number of different cultural representations and self-representations of People with HIV/AIDS (PHAs), and the politics, ethics, and agency involved in those articulations.

EVALUATION BREAKDOWN

Online Quizzes (20%; 2x10%): January 25 and February 1 (by 8pm)

Students will complete two online quizzes through Quercus on the basic science of HIV/AIDS. Topics covered include the HIV replication cycle, the immunological consequences of HIV/AIDS, the treatment of HIV/AIDS, and other content covered in the first section.

Short Paper 1 OR Creative Video Essay (25%)

For this assignment you have the option of working independently to write a traditional short essay OR you can work independently or in groups of two to create a creative video essay.

OPTION 1: Traditional Short Essay

In this short paper of 1000 words (800-1200 words) students must choose **one** of the following core concept areas:

1. Neoliberalism
2. Intersectionality
3. Stigma
4. Risk

To either:

- a) Discuss the similarities and/or differences between the public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic versus the HIV epidemic **OR**
- b) Explain the relationship between biomedical solutions and social and structural solutions to address a specific case study involving an HIV related health inequality

Students **must** define the core concepts that they use. While students can draw on multiple concepts, it must be clear which of the 4 concept areas listed above is the main analytical lens that they are using to frame their paper.

Students are encouraged to keep their cases studies as specific as possible (i.e., focusing on a particular geographical context, population group or community, or set of policies, programs, and institutions).

Both paper options require students to bring in research beyond what was presented in class and lectures. Students must draw on at least **two course readings** and **three outside scholarly sources**. In addition to these, students can draw on media and grey literature (e.g. policy documents, community reports, public health reports).

OPTION 2: Creative Video Essay

Students have the option of presenting their research and reflections on the course themes in video form. Working either independently or in groups of two, students can create a **7 to 10-minute video** (maximum 12 minutes) for this assignment. This video **must** cover and clearly define one of the following course concepts:

1. Neoliberalism
2. Intersectionality
3. Stigma
4. Risk

The video must address one of the following:

- a) Discuss the similarities and/or differences between the public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic versus the HIV epidemic **OR**
- b) Explain the relationship between biomedical solutions and social and structural solutions to address a specific case study involving an HIV related health inequality.

Students are encouraged to keep their cases studies as specific as possible (i.e., focusing on a particular geographical context, population group or community, or set of policies, programs, and institutions).

Students must also provide a brief one to two-page summary (250-500 words) of the arguments presented in their video, as well as a reference list including **two course readings** and **three outside scholarly sources**. In addition to these, students can draw on media and grey literature

Students are not allowed to interview people not in the class or perform any research with human subjects. (This would require an ethics review.)

Students are expected to be creative with this assignment and work to translate the knowledge to a broader lay audience in an engaging manner. The video can be composed of a series of one-minute clips or can be presented as one continuous series.

PAPER II: Due Friday, April 16, 4-5 pp (~1000-1250 words) (25%): An essay handout will be provided later in the course that explains the assignment in greater detail. Students will write a critical essay on at least two of the cultural representations of HIV/AIDS that we will examine in the final section of the course, choosing from a list of texts, including films (some of which we will screen or discuss in class) and scholarly articles.

There is 10% leftover from the assignments and what we will do is whichever section you do best on, we will make worth the extra 10%. So if you do best on the quizzes, they will be worth 30%,; if you do best on paper I, it will be worth 35%.

Participation. Worth 20%

Classes aim to foster a distinctive sense of community with opportunities to listen and be heard. Regular attendance and informed participation demonstrate a commitment to fellow students and to the ideal of a shared educational experience. Lectures and in-class discussions provide the foundation and context for all written assignments and other forms of evaluation.

It is obviously a different environment we now find ourselves in, and participation is in some ways easier, in others perhaps more challenging for some. It goes without saying that one cannot earn a participation mark without attending classes. We hope as many people as possible are willing to have cameras on so we can all interact in a more meaningful way, and so that we get to know students, and that you all get to better know some of your classmates. We realize that there are technological limitations for some folks (e.g., bandwidth), privacy issues, shared living/working spaces, comfort with the technology etc. Participation is about attending lectures, having read the material and being ready to discuss it; speaking in class, but that can also take the form of using the chat function to direct comments and questions to those teaching; offering to alert us to questions being posed in the chat; posting responses to the discussion board; participating and facilitating in breakaway groups/rooms during lectures; note-taking and posting that to the discussion board. In sum, one doesn't have to speak all the time, or dominate class/group discussions, to earn a perfect participation grade, and my experience is that for many students, the participation grade ends up pushing their grade to the next level, especially when it's worth 20%.

Recording Lectures:

Given that we have 60+ students in this class, some folks are in different time zones, some have other responsibilities at certain times, or may miss a class for any number of reasons, I will record the lectures and post them to Quercus. The discussions in breakout groups or the chat will NOT be recorded. Recordings will only be available to those registered in the course, as one more tool to help make this current compromised teaching environment as pedagogically effective and accommodating as possible. Recordings are therefore not to be used or posted elsewhere. We take student privacy very seriously and we don't want anyone feeling unable to fully participate because the lectures are being recorded. We also want to be clear that we do not expect students to attend class and then also go and listen to the lecture again. We will not keep each lecture up for the entire course, in part because they take up a lot of space on Quercus which limits the amount of content you can put up for each course.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Should there be any questions about the legitimacy of your work, you will be expected to produce all notes and drafts and discuss your work in a meeting with us. Penalties can range from a failing grade to suspension from the university for up to one year with an accompanying note on your transcript.

From the Arts & Science site on Academic Misconduct:

As a student, you alone are responsible for ensuring the integrity of your work and for understanding what constitutes an academic offence. Be sure to inform yourself on what is covered under the *Code*, and if you are not sure, seek guidance from your professor or TA.

The *Code divides academic offences into nine categories:**

1. Altering, forging or falsifying documents other than academic records (B.I.1.a)
2. Possession or use of unauthorized aids (B.I.1.b)
3. Impersonation (B.I.1.c)
4. Plagiarism (B.I.1.d)
5. Submission of work for which credit has previously been obtained (B.I.1.e)
6. Submission of work containing purported statement(s) of fact or reference(s) to concocted sources (B.I.1.f)
7. Altering, forging or falsifying an academic record (B.I.3.a)
8. Any other misconduct to obtain academic credit or advantage (B.I.3.b)
9. Assisting another student in committing an offence (B.II.1.a)

<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity/academic-misconduct>

On Academic Integrity at UofT:

<https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/perils-and-pitfalls/>

Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters

<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>

How not to Plagiarize

<https://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize/>

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION

It is both expected and welcome that students at the University of Toronto and in this class may require a variety of accommodations to fully succeed in their academic pursuits, and reasonable accommodation does not compromise the integrity or rigour of the university experience. The University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the University's courses and programs. If you have a disability, chronic illness, or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach your professor, TA and/or the Accessibility Services Office as soon as possible. Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. More information is available at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>

OTHER SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

We are very much committed to your academic success, especially during this challenging period. In addition to the supports we provide, the Academic Success Centre at the University of Toronto provides workshops, information on learning strategies, peer supports and learning strategist consultations to support your success. Many of us, at one point or another, can use advice on how to avoid typical behaviours of procrastination, active note-taking or research or presentation skills. For more information, visit <https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/asc>.

Given our current situation, many folks are experiencing various challenges, including physical and mental health. Should you experience an academic disruption of any kind that seriously and negatively affects your studies (such as inability to listen to lectures, complete assignments, or focus on your studies), make sure you reach out to your registrar (which is what they are for), and they can help support you, connect you with other supports, and intervene and negotiate on your behalf with your professors.

Relevant Offices and Organizations at the University of Toronto

Sexual and Gender Diversity Office <https://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca>

Health and Wellness Centre <https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc>

WRITING CENTRES

Students can find information about college writing centres at <http://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science/>. The teaching approach of the college writing centres is described at <http://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/learning/>.

The home page for the website "Writing at the University of Toronto" is <http://writing.utoronto.ca>. You can use the navigation bar or the search function to find pages relevant to your course. Students will benefit from your recommendations.

- More than 60 Advice files on all aspects of academic writing are available at <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca>. A complete list of printable PDF versions are listed at <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/student-pdfs/>.
- You may in particular want to refer students to "How Not to Plagiarize" and other advice on documentation format and methods of integrating sources; these are listed in the section at <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/>.

Please refer students to the Writing Plus workshop series, described at <http://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-plus/>.

Information about the English Language Learning program (ELL) is available at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>. You might particularly want to recommend the following activities:

- the Communication Cafe, which meets weekly at five different times and locations for the first seven weeks of each term for practice with oral skills like class discussion and presentations
- Reading eWriting, an online program that helps students engage course readings more effectively. You can also find further instructional advice files for students and for classroom instruction on this site.

SCHEDULE

January 14: Introduction & Course Overview (Rayter, Rousseau, Gaspar)

SECTION I: Thinking Critically about HIV and Biomedical Research

January 21: Introduction to HIV Biomedicine: People & Populations (Rousseau)

Readings:

Deeks, S., Overbaugh, J., Phillips, A., Buchbinder, S. (2015). HIV Infection. *Nature Reviews Disease Primers* 1:1-22.

Sturken, M. (1997). Bodies of Commemoration: The Immune System and HIV (Ch. 7). In *Tangled memories the Vietnam War, the AIDS epidemic, and the politics of remembering*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Recommended:

Bhaskaran, K., Rentsch, C.T., MacKenna, B., Schultze, A., Mehrkar, A. & et al. (2021). HIV infection and COVID-19 death: a population-based cohort analysis of UK primary care data and linked national death registrations within the OpenSAFELY platform. *Lancet HIV* 8(1) E24-32.

Bekker, L. & et al. (2018). Advancing global health and strengthening the HIV response in the era of the Sustainable Development Goals: the International AIDS Society - Lancet Commission. *Lancet* S0140-6736(18): 31070-5.

*****Due: Online Quiz 1*** (Due January 25; posted >48h in advance)**

January 28: Infection, Virus Replication, Prevention, Treatment & Cure (Rousseau)

Readings:

Pitman, M., & et al. (2018). Barriers and strategies to achieve a cure for HIV. *Lancet HIV* 5:e317-28.

Barré-Sinoussi, F., Ross, A.L., Delfraissy, J. (2013). Past, Present and Future: 30 Years of HIV Research. *Nature Reviews Microbiology* 11:877-883.

Additional: Goodkin, K. & et al. 2017). Effect of ageing on neurocognitive function by stage of HIV infection: evidence from the Multicentre AIDS Cohort Study. *Lancet HIV* 4:e411-22.

*****Due: Online Quiz 2*** (Due February 1; posted >48h in advance)**

Section II: Sociological and Public Health Dimensions of HIV/AIDS

February 4: Introduction: The Social and Political Dimensions of HIV (Gaspar)

Adam, B.D. (2016). Neoliberalism, masculinity, and HIV risk. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 13, 321-329.

Mahajan, M. (2017). Rethinking prevention: shifting conceptualizations of evidence and intervention in South Africa's AIDS epidemic. *BioSocieties*, 13(1), 148-169.

Watkins-Hayes, C. (2014). Intersectionality and the sociology of HIV/AIDS: Past, present, and future research directions. *The Annual Review of Sociology*, 40, 431-467.

Section III: AIDS, Culture, and Representation (Rayter)

February 11: AIDS Activism and the Politics of Representation Part I (Rayter)

Screen & Discuss *United in Anger: A History of ACT UP*. Dir. Jim Hubbard, 2012.

Read: Cvetkovich, "ACT UP's Lesbians"

Read: Sturken, "AIDS and the Politics of Representation"

February 25: AIDS Activism and the Politics of Representation Part II (Rayter)

**Watch in Advance: *Living Proof: HIV and the Pursuit of Happiness*

Dir. Kermit Cole, 1994 (70 mins, on YouTube)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BbcCFgZ0mo&t=195s>

We will discuss for the first part of class and then watch together:

A Red Ribbon Around My House

Dir. Portia Rankoane, South Africa (26 mins)

Afrikaans, English, Sotho and Zulu with English subtitles

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNjScSMPgSI>

March 4: Risk and Stigma (Gaspar)

Crawford, R. (1994). The boundaries of the self and the unhealthy other: reflections on health, culture and AIDS. *Social Science & Medicine*, 38(10), 1347-1365.

Mykhalovskiy, E., Sanders, C., Hastings, C., Bisailon. (2020). Explicitly racialized and extraordinarily over-represented: Black immigrant men in 25 years of news reports on HIV non-disclosure criminal cases in Canada. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*,
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2020.1733095>

Woodgate, R.L., Zurba, M., Tennent, P., Cochrane, C., Payne, M., & Mignone, J. (2017). “People try and label me as someone I’m not”: The social ecology of Indigenous people living with HIV, stigma, and discrimination in Manitoba, Canada. *Social Science & Medicine*, 194, 17–24.

March 11: AIDS Activism and Community Mobilization (Gaspar)

Epstein, S. (1995). The construction of lay expertise: AIDS activism and the forging of credibility in the reform of clinical trials. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 20(4), 408–437.

Heywood, M. (2009). South Africa’s Treatment Action Campaign: combining law and social mobilization to realize the right to health. *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, 1(1), 14–36.

March 18: HIV Knowledge Production and Community-Based Research (Gaspar)

Flicker, S., O’Campo, P., Monchalín, R., Thistle, J., Worthington, C., Masching, R., ... Thomas, C. (2015). Research done in “a good way”: the importance of Indigenous elder involvement in HIV community-based research. *American Journal of Public Health*, 105(6), 1149–1154.

Ibáñez-Carrasco, F., Watson, J.R., & Tavares, J. (2019). Supporting peer researchers: recommendations from our lived experience/expertise in community-based research in Canada. *Harm Reduction Journal*, 16 (55), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12954-019-0322-6>

Shannon, K., Bright, V., Allinott, S. et al. (2007). Community-based HIV prevention research among substance-using women in survival sex work: The Maka Project Partnership. *Harm Reduction Journal*, 4(20), <https://doi.org/10.1186/1477-7517-4-20>

March 25: HIV, Substance Use and Harm Reduction (Gaspar)

Bryant, J. et al. (2018). The rush to risk when interrogating the relationship between methamphetamine use and sexual practice among gay and bisexual men. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 55, 242–248.

Watson, T., Kolla, G., van der Meulen, E., & Dodd, Z. (2020). Critical studies of harm reduction: overdose response in uncertain political times. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 76, 102615.

Wilson, P.A., Nanin, J., Amesty, S., Wallace, S., Cherenack, E. M., & Fullilove, R. (2014). Using syndemic theory to understand vulnerability to HIV infection among Black and Latino men in New York City. *Journal of Urban Health*, 91(5), 983–998.

*****Paper I Due: Monday, March 29*****

April 1: HIV/AIDS: The Local and Global

Tola Mbulaheni: Expanding Our Thinking of Race and Racism: Structural Factors Shaping the HIV Epidemic for Black Communities in Canada and Globally

Read: Wende Elizabeth Marshal (2015)l, “AIDS, Race and the Limits of Science”

Brigid Burke: Corporate Social Responsibility: Responses to HIV in Brazilian Mining Communities

Apr 1: AIDS Activism and the Politics of Representation Part III (Rayter) Memory and Memorialization

Screen *Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt*. Dir. Robert Epstein & Jeffrey Friedman 1989.

Read: Sturken, "Conversations with the Dead: Bearing Witness in the AIDS Memorial Quilt"

Read: Hawkins, “Naming Names: The Art of Memory and the AIDS Project Names Quilt”

Representing the Global: South African Film

Screen: *Life, Above All*. Dir. Oliver Schmitz, 2010 (based on Allan Stratton’s *Chandra’s Secrets*, 2004)

****Paper II Due Friday April 16****