Course Description

What does «liberation» mean to queer individuals and communities? How do Christian traditions worldwide relate to queer issues and queer believers? For the last twenty years, queer theologians and communities have been developing contextual theologies to challenge and critique the ingrained heteronormativity in theological thought, spiritual practices, and institutional governance. Drawing from an interdisciplinary perspective, the course aims to examine and explore the development of queer theologies in the specific contexts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The focus of the
course is intentionally non-US centered on offering future ministers, scholars, and activists tools to collaborate and interact with experiences, key topics, and thinkers within the complex and yet fascinating world of queer liberation theologies, thus, enriching their worldview and praxis gloally.

Learning Objectives

1. Provide the student/s with the necessary knowledge on the many liberationist Christian theologies developed in Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

2. Learn about the emergence and development of queer liberation theologies in Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Identify the different situations of the emerging Queer Liberation Theologies in the contexts of Latin America, Asia, and Africa;

2. Interrelate the various aspects of Christianity with the experience of Queer theologians and believers in their own genderized/sexualized context;

3. Distinguish particular trends in Queer Liberation Theologies by comparing them with scholarly works in Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

Given the time limitation of the course (one semester), it would be impossible to provide extensive insight into the complex situation of Queer Liberation Theologies in every continent. The main goal of the course is to provide the students with tools and critical information that would guide them into deepening certain aspects in their research or specific studies.

Concurrently, because Queer Liberation Theologies are an emerging field, some of the authors —whose work is studied in this course— are not Queer theologians themselves. Some of them are allies who value the importance of Queer theologies while others report on this situation from their perspective.
and do not necessarily uphold themselves the beliefs or positions analyzed in their work.

Course Materials

All the course materials will be available for access at the GTU Moodle’s course site. Due to GTU’s compliance with fair use regulations, you will not be able to download the reading materials. Audio-visual materials will be posted whenever technical means make this possible.

Course Requirements and Grading

To pass this course, you are expected to fulfill the following requirements:

1. Posting your comments and interacting with the other students by responding to their interventions on the conversations on the Moodle’s course site. That is a way to engage in the collective processing of the topics by paying attention to what others think and to what you reflect on both the materials and your experiences. Although you are not required to always agree with your peers, respect and politeness are expected on these responses. Whenever possible, please use gender inclusive language. You are expected to interact a minimum of three times per week in the conversations to get your grade. You have the right to be absent three times from the class (equivalent to one week) throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, this assignment will count for thirty percent (30%) of the course grade.

2. At the end of sections 1 (October 7th) and 2 (November 18th), students will submit a three (3) pages reflection paper. It is a reflection paper and not a summary of class materials. In other words, this is the product of your analysis, intuitions, concerns, and/or «thirst» for knowing more on the course topics. The goal of the reflection is to encourage you to begin articulating your own discourse by expressing your own concerns, voicing your agreement or disagreement with the authors’ scholarly work, etc. Each of these assignments will count for fifteen percent (15%) of your final grade, that is thirty percent (30%) in total at the end of the semester.
3. During the last week of classes (December 16th-22nd), you are required to submit a final project. The overall idea of the final project is to show how you would communicate the topics studied and discussed throughout the course to an audience that is not academic (for example, by imagining how to present the class topics to your congregation, faith-based organization, place of activism, and the like). The project should make evident your voice articulating a theological discourse by using the social science tools acquired in the course. This assignment will count for forty percent (40%) of your grade in the class.

**Academic Conduct**

Throughout the course, you are expected and encouraged to maintain an academic spirit. Mainly, you are expected to pay attention to the following aspects:

a) **Respectful interactions:** Respect for the opinion and right of expression of your classmates is mandatory, whether your interaction is face-to-face (synchronic) or online (diachronic). You have all the right to disagree with a classmate or with your instructor. There are ways to politely express your point of view and have a civilized interaction. Be always intentional to state the basis upon which you build of position. Respect is not only required in the classroom setting but also any other communication with your classmates outside the classroom.

b) **Language:** Inclusive and non-discriminatory language is expected in spoken and written formats whenever is possible. It may be necessary —in specific cases to understand particular topics— to use a word that it is no longer “politically correct.” In these cases, be very intentional to state first the purpose of you recalling that term and, if in writing, always include it between quotation marks. Otherwise, this may offend or hurt any or your peers. When in doubt about this, please consult me before you mention or write that term. Except in this situation, any derogatory or offensive term would be considered as inappropriate for class interaction.

c) **Plagiarism:** Your ideas and work, as well as others’ are valued in this class. Taking words, graphics, and/or ideas from any other sources without full attribution constitutes an academic offense. A proper citation must be given to all formats of production (written, visual, auditory). Many students are often tempted to cut-and-paste directly from the internet. Although there is no reason to dismiss citation from the internet —when authorship, URL address and date of accessing the website is adequately given—, lack of these elements also
constitute plagiarism. Whenever in doubt on how to proceed on this issue, please contact the instructor before you submit your materials through the discussion board. To learn the basis for appropriate academic conduct is an ongoing process, and as your instructor, I will always be willing to assist you.

d) Confidentiality: Related to the compliance with FERPA (see the section below), please refrain from using classmates’ comments (High res and hybrid courses) or Moodle postings in forums (online courses) either in your papers or outside the classroom. Please respect your classmates right to keep their comments aimed only to this class.

To learn the basis for appropriate academic conduct is an ongoing process, and, as your instructor, I will always be willing to assist you. However, in the event of miscommunication or offense against your peers, you are expected to apologize and cease on your behavior/comment. Otherwise, you may be subjected to disciplinary action.

**Notice to Students About Your Privacy**

Starr King School for the Ministry takes maximum care to maintain safety for our students. Under FERPA (the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), your records are confidential and protected. Under most circumstances, your records will not be released without your written consent although certain directory information may be released without your prior consent unless a written request to restrict this is on file. You can learn here about student rights to privacy at.

At the same time, SKSM faculty members are encouraged to use whichever educational technologies support learning objectives, but you need to remain aware that anything that gets posted (whether assumed private or not) can always be re-posted and broadcast widely. In this course, we will be working with third-party applications online (i.e., chat and internet phone systems). While GTU Moodle has built-in safeguards meant to protect you from privacy infringements, different proprietors of these external sites may or may not have privacy guarantees, nor does FERPA policy at the GTU apply to these sites.

It will be your responsibility to read the privacy documentation at each site. If you have filed the paperwork and are classified as protected under the GTU FERPA qualifications, it will be acceptable for you to use an alias when using the Web 2.0 sites required for this course. If you still have concerns, please e-mail the SKSM registrar as soon as possible to discuss your options.
Disability Policy

As a member school of the Graduate Theological Union consortium, Starr King School for the Ministry students is included in the GTU “Students with Disabilities” policy. SKSM Student Services Coordinator, Rain Jordan, who can be reached at rjordan@sksm.edu, can assist you in the process of requesting accommodations after you filled out your form through the Graduate Theological Union. Your SKSM Advisor can assist you in planning a course of study, but you need to grant permission for it as the Faculty in your courses also need to be notified.

As a student, you are responsible for fully participating in the process and exercising due diligence to ensure that the provision of accommodations is accomplished. To submit your request, you need to include official written documentation along with the form from a professional who has the credentials and expertise to diagnose your condition. The form for this step is available on the GTU website. GTU/SKSM stipulate that students are responsible for incurring any cost associated with the documentation as well as require that students request accommodations in advance (no longer than the first week of classes) of when the accommodation is needed.

Reading Assignments and Class Schedule

Week 1 (Sept 2-8): Queering Religion

Required materials


Optional materials


Week 2 (Sept 9-15): Religion meets Post-colonialism

Required materials


Optional materials


Week 3 (Sept 16-22): Gender and Sexuality in Latin America

Required materials


Optional materials


Week 4 (Sept 23-29): Disrupting Liberation Theologies in Latin America

Required materials


**Optional materials**


---

**Week 5 (Sept 30-Oct 6): Queering Dogmas**

**Required materials**


**Optional materials**


Week 6 (Oct 7-13): Bodies and Sexuality: Religious Connections

Required materials


Optional materials


Required Assignment

✓ Submission of reflection paper #1.
Section 2: Asia

Week 7 (Oct 14-20): Gender and Sexuality in Asia

Required materials


Optional materials


✓ Poljski, Carolyn (2011). *Coming Out, Coming Home or Inviting People in? Supporting Same-Sex Attracted Women from Immigrant and Refugee Communities*. Melbourne: Multicultural Centre for Women’s Health.

Week 8 (Oct 21-27): Reading Week

Week 9 (Oct 28-Nov 3): Challenging Beliefs

Required materials


Optional materials


Week 10 (Nov 4-10): Embodied Theologies

Required materials


Optional materials

Required materials


Optional materials


Required Assignment

✓ Submission of reflection paper #2.
Section 3: Africa

Required materials


Optional materials


Week 13 (Nov 25-Dec 1): Debating Sexual Theologies

Required materials


Optional materials


Week 14 (Dec 2-8): Queer Issues: Past & Present

Required materials


Optional materials


Week 15 (Dec 9-15): Queering Hermeneutics

Required materials


Optional materials


Week 16 (Dec 16-22): Wrapping-up

Required Assignment

✓ Submission of final project.