

Psychology of Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Syllabus

EXAMPLE SYLLABUS FROM SPRING 2020

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Course Schedule: [Day] and [Day] in [Building/Room]
Section 01 [Time]
Section 02 [Time]

Office hours: I encourage you to come to my office hours on [Day and Time] in Crean Hall 106 (501 W. Palm Ave). Office hours are an extension of the classroom.

Email correspondence: Please write [course], [name], and [topic of email] in the subject line. For example: Psy 344-01, Heath Schechinger, exam question. I will respond within 48 hours. If you have not received a response from me after 48 hours, please resend the email.



Course Objectives

PSY 344: Official course description

A systematic study of the psychological issues affecting lesbians, gay men and bisexual individuals in American society. The course integrates the most recent research-based information with life experiences of lesbian/gay/bisexual people in such areas as conceptualization and origin of sexual orientation, lifespan development, psychosocial identity, relationships, internalized homophobia, parenting and clinical services. Critical and controversial issues will be debated. The course emphasizes an affirmative approach and is appropriate for students of any sexual orientation. 3 credits.

Course Overview

This course promotes psychology as a field to advance the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people (LGBTQ). We will engage with research that strengthens our understanding of historical events and contemporary topics. This course will differ from, but also build substantially upon, other courses in psychology as well as courses in the women's and LGB studies minors. In developing this course, I was mindful to create course readings, activities, and assignments that would resonate with students from social science and humanities backgrounds. We each bring our experiences and identities to the classroom—and these guide how we interpret new knowledge and learn from each other. I encourage you to draw connections between our course material and your other courses (e.g., women's studies, health sciences, business, English), lived experiences, and current events in the U.S.

Across our weekly topics, three common themes emerge: **1)** How to stereotypes or myths about LGBTQ individuals “hold up” in the face of empirical research? **2)** Who's been “left out” of research, theory, and clinical practice? What can we (the field of psychology, society, the media, etc...) learn from people “on the margins”? **3)** When there is a social problem (health disparity, policy inequity), how can we use science to intervene? My goal as an instructor is for each of you to see the implications of course content in real-world contexts, foster a collaborative learning environment, and engage in critical thought and ethical decision making.

Expectations

What you can expect from me:

- Clarification and elaboration of the concepts covered in the materials assigned for the readings and films
- A commitment to helping you develop critical thinking and writing skills
- Consistent effort in promoting an inclusive and collaborative learning environment
- Good organization and communication
- Clear explanations of assignments
- Attendance and information participation 😊
- Fair grading of your work
 - I prioritize fairness when grading, though sometimes you may still have a concern. **I will accept appeals about exam questions and other assignments in writing via email.** You must submit your appeal within 5 business days of the grade being posted.
 - For **exam questions**, in your email appeal, you must state the exact reasons for your negative impression of the exam question and which other answer you believe should be considered correct. Provide support for your perspective and state why the option you chose is as good or a better answer than the answer I labeled as the correct one.
 - For **written assignments**, in your email appeal, you must state why you believe the grade/points was unwarranted. Provide support for your perspective.

What I expect from you:

Attendance

- Throughout the semester, we will engage in individual and group activities, Skype sessions with researchers, and a host of discussions about course materials, news, and films in class. Enthusiastic participation is expected, and attendance is required.
- **You can miss two class sessions for any reason**, whether that reason is typically excused (athletic competition, emergency, religious event, illness) or unexcused (too much partying, vacation, “not feeling it”). There is no need to justify or explain the two absences. **After two missed class sessions, each missed class translates into minus 4 points off your overall final class grade.** For example, if you had a total of 182 points in the class (out of 200 points), your class average of an A- would move to B+ (178 points out of 200 points) if three classes are missed.
- **If you miss class:** know that assignments need to be turned in on time via assignments on Blackboard. Read the assigned materials carefully and ask someone in class if you can copy their notes. If you are still confused about a concept, come to my office hours and we will clear things up. Take responsibility for your own learning.
- The only exception is if you have multiple excused absences (including athletic notes, physician or therapist notes). Please be mindful that attendance needs to comply with university policy (e.g., “The University recommends as a minimal policy that students who are absent 20 percent of the course should be failed.”); see: <https://catalog.chapman.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=472>

Thorough reading (or listening) of weekly assigned readings

- Come to each class prepared. Do a careful reading or listening of the assigned readings, podcast, or video clip before each class.

Informed participation

- Be prepared to discuss class materials in an engaged and informed way, ask questions, listen and learn from each other. See below “Engagement and Participation” section for how you can earn points related to informed participation.
- I understand that some of you may be uncomfortable with public speaking. To ensure that all students have opportunity to earn credit for informed participation, contact me if you are having difficulty participating so we can discuss alternative ideas.
- Several classes will include a short multiple choice and open-ended quiz that you will first complete individually then with your team in class. These quizzes are designed to help you identify gaps in your study habits as well as provide an opportunity to collaboratively learn/teach others. These quizzes will serve as the basis for your study guides for the midterm and final exams. Although these quizzes are ungraded, you can lose class points for not participating or your team could decide not to work with you if you’re not coming to class prepared (sad!).

Assignments submitted on time

- Assignments that are submitted late will be deducted **half of a letter grade** each 24 hours it is not submitted (including the day it was due if it is late).

Your own writing

- Academic Integrity (see below). All assignments will be submitted via Turnitin on Blackboard.

Classroom conduct

- Please do not use your cell phone during class (no phone calls, texting, facebook-ing, insta-ing, Tinder-ing). If you’re using your computer to look at class readings or take notes, have only those open. Also, arrive to class on time.

Required Readings

All weekly readings and links video or podcast clips are available on our course Blackboard site. Please bring readings to class (electronic copies are fine).

Grading

Assignments & Exams	Points
Midterm exam	55 points
Group poster ⁺⁺ presentation: Teaching a key concept	40 points
Letter to an elected official or CEO	40 points
Final exam	55 points
Engagement and participation (e.g., “Speaker Q&A” questions, ungraded quizzes, discussion)	10 points
Total	200 points

The average grade that students earn in my courses is a B (+/-5%)

Course Grade	Point Range	Percentage Cutoff
A	188-200	94%
A-	180-187	90%
B+	174-179	87%
B	168-173	84%
B-	160-167	80%
C+	154-159	77%
C	148-153	74%
C-	140-147	70%
D	120-139	60%
F	< 120	< 60%

Assignments & Exams

MIDTERM EXAM (55 points)

The midterm exam will cover course content from weeks 1 through 6. This includes (but not limited to): assigned readings, audio/visual media, and main points from guest lectures. The midterm exam will include multiple choice and short essay questions. ****Bring a scantron****

Date: [x/xx] in class

GROUP POSTER++ PROJECT: TEACHING A KEY CONCEPT (40 points)

The purpose of this assignment is for you work collaboratively (in groups of 4-5) to design a poster++ presentation on a key concept related to gender and/or sexuality. The poster should convey a description of the phenomenon, theory, or issue then present research evidence explaining or clarify the key concept. Interactive poster activities are encouraged (hence the naming poster++ because students can use props and creative means to present their topics).

For instructions, insight, & grading overview see: Group Poster++ Project – Teaching a Key Concept

Due dates:

[x/xx]: Identify key concept that group will present on in class (5 points)

[x/xx]: Poster due by 11:59pm on Blackboard

[x/xx] & [x/xx]: Group presentation in class (35 points)

LETTER TO AN ELECTED OFFICIAL OR CEO (40 points)

The purpose of this assignment is for you write an elected official (local, state, federal) or a CEO (or upper level partner) about a LGBTQ issue that we have covered in class. This should be an issue that you care about—discrimination in the workplace, health disparities, bystander/ally training, marriage, or media representation (etc...). Research bills, laws, policies, or practices/marketing campaigns related to the topic you're interested in a government or business setting. Your goal is to ground your letter in course materials as well as incorporate new supporting research articles. You will choose one main bill, law, policy, or practice/campaign to write about and develop at least three main argument (again, using course content and additional research to support these argument). Thus, you will be developing a powerful voice with a critical lens and research-informed arguments. Approximately 3 pages using a specific letter template (additional pages can include pictures, diagrams/graphs, and other supporting visuals).

For instructions, insight, & grading overview see: Letter to Elected Official/CEO + letter template

Due dates:

[x/xx]: Submit topic and 1-2 potential recipients by 11:59pm via Blackboard; use template provided (5 points)

[x/xx]: Submit summary of three main arguments and supporting research by 11:59pm via Blackboard; use template provided (10 points)

[x/xx]: Draft of letter (printed or electronic) due in class for peer review. Note, you do not earn points for bringing your draft to class, but points will be deducted if you do not bring a draft

[x/xx]: Final letter due, one copy submitted via Blackboard by 8:59am and one copy in class in addressed envelope with stamp (25 points)

FINAL EXAM (55 points)

The final exam will primarily cover course content from weeks 7 through 15; a small portion of the exam will be cumulative. This includes (but not limited to): assigned readings, audio/visual media, key concepts presented by groups, and main points from guest lectures. The final exam will include multiple choice and short essay questions. ****Bring a scantron****

Dates: Section 01: [x/xx], [Time] | Section 02: [x/xx], [Time]

ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION (10 points)

Over the course of the term, there will be several ways in which engagement and participation is counted, including submitting questions for guest speakers, engaging in small group discussions, raising connections between course materials, and short reflection pieces. A portion of engagement and participation will be written materials turned in during class (e.g., questions for guest speakers) and a portion will be observations made during class.

Engaged participant	Active participant	Average participant	Limited participant	Disengaged participant
Contributes in significant ways and exhibits thoughtful preparation with readings. Synthesizes readings/points across multiple classes; raises thought provoking questions	Demonstrates great preparation and offers interpretation and analysis of material. Makes connections across course materials; raises interesting questions	Reads the material and participates minimally. Engages in small group discussions but may not raise interesting points to the class. Not prepared for class (e.g., did not read, bring draft).	Does not read material or does not offer any elaboration and/or does not participate in class discussions. Often uses phone or computer. Not prepared for class (e.g., did not read, bring draft).	Seldom participates, uses phone or computer, is not engaged with material or peers. Not prepared for class (e.g., did not read, bring draft).

Due dates:

[x/xx]: Question for guest speaker on kink, Sir Rucifer. Submit at least **one** thoughtful question by 11:59pm via Blackboard (2 points)

Extra Credit (up to +8 points)

You will have 1-2 opportunities to earn extra credit (up to +4 points each opportunity) this semester. These opportunities and due dates will be announced at some point during the semester.

Keep these three questions in mind each week:

- 1) How to stereotypes or myths about LGBTQ individuals “hold up” in the face of empirical research?
- 2) Who’s been “left out” of research, theory, and clinical practice? What can we (the field of psychology, society, the media, etc...) learn from people “on the margins”?
- 3) When there is a social problem, how can we use science to intervene?

Date	Topic	Readings and Materials*	Due Dates
Week 1 [x/xx]	intro to the psychology of gender diversity & sexual orientation Class 1: hello + syllabus		
[x/xx]	Class 2: common language	American Psychological Association. (2015). Key terms and concepts in understanding gender diversity and sexual orientation among students. **read this before class	
Week 2 [x/xx]	historical roots & contemporary theory Class 1: historical roots + pivotal events	Hammack, P. L., Mayers, L., & Windell, E. P. (2013). Narrative, psychology and the politics of sexual identity in the United States: From ‘sickness’ to ‘species’ to ‘subject’. <i>Psychology & Sexuality</i> , 4(3), 219-243. **read this before class Spiegel, A. (Host). (2002, January 18). 81 Words. This American Life. [Podcast.] Chicago: Chicago Public Radio. https://www.thisamericanlife.org/204/81-words ***Listen to Act Two 30 mins before class	
[x/xx]	Class 2: intersectionality	Bowleg, L. (2013). "Once you've blended the cake, you can't take the parts back to the main ingredients": Black gay and bisexual men's descriptions and experiences of intersectionality. <i>Sex Roles</i> , 68(11-12), 754-767. **read this before class Watch <i>What is Intersectionality?</i> video produced by Dr. Peter Hopkins, Newcastle University: https://vimeo.com/263719865 (< 3 minutes) **watch this before class	

<p>Week 3 [x/xx]</p>	<p>Research methods & researcher biases Class 1: research methods + heterosexual biases</p>	<p>Clarke, V., Ellis, S. J., Peel, E., & Riggs, D. W. (2010). Chapter 3: Doing LGBTQ psychological research. ***excerpt read pages 52-73; skip "Discourse Analysis" section on pp. 61-63. **read this before class</p> <p>McClelland, S. I. & Dutcher, H. (2016). Heterosexual bias in research. In A. E. Goldberg (Ed.), <i>The SAGE Encyclopedia of LGBTQ Studies</i> (pp. 502-505). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. **we will read this in class</p>	
<p>[x/xx]</p>	<p>Class 2: experimental design + sexual identity</p>	<p>Preciado, M. A., Johnson, K. L., & Peplau, L. A. (2013). The impact of cues of stigma and support on self-perceived sexual orientation among heterosexually identified men and women. <i>Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 49</i>, 477-485. *Skip Study 3 **read this before class</p>	<p>In class: Group Poster++ Presentation identify topic</p>
<p>Week 4 [x/xx]</p>	<p>Identities & development Class 1: focus on sexual orientation</p>	<p>Bilodeau, B. L. & Renn K. A. (2005). Analysis of LGBT identity development models and implication for practice. <i>New Directions for Student Services, 111</i>, 25-37. **read this before class</p>	
<p>[x/xx]</p>	<p>class cancelled</p>	<p>Dr. Moors will at the Society Personality and Social Psychology conference ☺ <i>Recommendation: Meet with your groups about the Poster++ Group Presentation</i></p>	
<p>Week 5 [x/xx]</p>	<p>Identities & development (cont.) Class 1: Queer Eye</p>	<p><i>Recommendation: Bring snacks to class!</i></p>	
<p>[x/xx]</p>	<p>Class 2: focus on gender diversity</p>	<p>American Psychological Association (2014). Answers to your questions about transgender people, gender identity, and gender expression (3rd ed.). **read this before class</p> <p>Vasey, P. L., & Bartlett, N. H. (2007). What can the Samoan "fa'afafine" teach us about the Western concept of gender identity disorder in childhood? <i>Perspectives in Biology and Medicine, 50</i>(4), 481-490. **read this before class</p>	

		Young. E. (2019, January 15). Young trans children know who they are. <i>The Atlantic</i> . **we will read this in class	
Week 6 [x/xx]	Mental Health Class 1: mental health and conversation therapy + guest lecture	Olson, K. R., Durwood, L., DeMeules, M., & McLaughlin, K. A. (2016). Mental health of transgender children who are supported in their identities. <i>Pediatrics</i> , 137(3), e20153223. **read this before class American Psychological Association. (2012). Guidelines for psychological practice with lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 67(1), 10-42. [***excerpt, read pages 10-15; introduction & guidelines 1, 2, and 3] **read this before class <i>Guest lecture</i> by Ashley Ramos, Marriage and Family Therapy graduate student (specializes in sex + LGBTQ therapy)	
[x/xx]	Class 2: group work + midterm review	Poster++ Group Presentation group work in class (half of class) Midterm exam review (half of class)	
Week 7 [x/xx]	Class 1: midterm exam	<i>please remember to bring a scantron</i>	Submit 1-2 questions for Sir Rucifer by 11:59pm on [x/xx] via Blackboard (2 points)
[x/xx]	Class 2: kink	Lehmiller, J. J. (2019, November 18). Seven most common sexual fantasies. <i>Psychology Today</i> . **read this before class <i>Guest lecture:</i> Kink by Sir Rucifer, sexuality educator and professional dom	
Week 8: Classes cancelled Spring break!			
Week 9 [x/xx]	Class 1: Poster++ Group Presentations	Three groups will present; readings TBA	Group Poster++ Presentation: Poster due [x/xx] by 11:59pm on Blackboard
[x/xx]	Class 2: Poster++ Group	Three groups will present; readings TBA	

	Presentations		
Week 10 [x/xx]	Prejudice & Minority Stress Class 1: prejudice + discrimination	Herek, G. M. & McLemore, K. A. (2013). Sexual prejudice. <i>Annual Review of Psychology</i> , 64, 309-333. **read this before class Meyer, I. H. & Frost, D. (2013). Minority stress and the health of sexual minorities. In C. J. Patterson & A. R. D'Augelli (Eds.), <i>Handbook of psychology and sexual orientation</i> (pp. 252-266). New York: Oxford University Press. **read this before class	Letter to elected official/CEO assignment; submit topic of interest and identify 1-2 people using template on [x/xx] by 11:59pm via Blackboard.
readings [x/xx]	Class 2: minority stress + resilience	Kwon, P. (2013). Resilience in lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals. <i>Personality and Social Psychology Review</i> , 17(4), 371-383. **read this before class	
Week 11 [x/xx]	Media + (in)visibility Class 1: representation in the media	Bond, B. J. (2015). The mediating role of self-discrepancies in the relationship between media exposure and well-being among lesbian, gay, and bisexual adolescents. <i>Media Psychology</i> , 18(1), 51-73. **read this before class Robehmed, N. (2015, August 6). Study reports too few LGB characters, no transgender roles in movies. <i>Forbes</i> . **read this before class Corcione, D. (2018, August 18). How television is leading the asexual revolution. <i>Esquire</i> . **read this before class	
[x/xx]	Class 2: Gaycation + overview of letter assignment	<i>Recommendation: Bring snacks to class!</i>	
Week 12 [x/xx]	Dating & relationships Class 1: monogamous relationships	Kurdek, L. A. (2005). What do we know about gay and lesbian couples? <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i> , 14(5), 251-254. **read this before class	Letter to elected official/CEO: Submit 3 main points & supporting research on [x/xx] by 11:59pm on Blackboard
[x/xx]	Class 2: consensually	Moors, A. C., Matsick, J., & Schechinger, H. (2017). Unique and shared relationship	

	non-monogamous relationships	benefits of consensually non-monogamous and monogamous relationships: A review and insights for moving forward. <i>European Psychologist</i> , 22(1), 55-71. **read this before class Conley, T. D. & Moors, A. C. (2014). More oxygen please!: How polyamorous relationship strategies might oxygenate marriage. <i>Psychological Inquiry</i> , 25(1), 56-63. **read this before class	
Week 13 [x/xx]	Guest Lecture	Q&A with Phoenix: Polyamory and you	
[x/xx]	Class 2: peer review + feedback		Letter to elected official/CEO assignment: bring draft (printed or electronic) to [x/xx] class
Week 14 [x/xx]	LGBTQ Ally Development Class 1: ally roles and movements	Fingerhut, A. W. (2011). Straight allies: What predicts heterosexuals' alliance with the LGBT community? <i>Journal of Applied Social Psychology</i> , 41(9), 2230-2248.	
[x/xx]	Class 2: developing evidence-based skills	Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD). Tips for Allies of Transgender People.	
Week 15 [x/xx]	What about.....: Topics and issues not covered	<i>TBA: you decide!</i> A survey two weeks before this class will be sent out to decide which topic(s) you would like to discuss that we haven't been able to cover in class	
[x/xx]	Class 2: discussion of letters + final exam review	Discuss letter to elected official/CEO – calls to action (half of class) Final exam review (half of class)	Letter to elected official/CEO: 2 copies of letter due at <i>start of class on [x/xx]</i> (1 in addressed envelope w/stamp; 1 submitted on Blackboard)