Goals for Course

This course offers a unique opportunity to apply the basic tenet that human development is excruciatingly complex and thus cannot be understood from the perspective of a single discipline. Topics covered in this course emanate from clinical and developmental psychology, psychiatry, genetics, sociology, social history, education, anthropology, women's studies, social policy, ethnic minority studies, and so forth. Only from these multiple perspectives can one gain a sense of the multidimensional nature of the lives and lifestyles of gender and sexual minority individuals.

Despite decades of misinformation and stereotypes that have cast gender and sexual minority individuals in a simplistic manner, the reality of their lives is far more complex. For example, lesbians, gays, and bisexuals form solid, traditional relationships and engage in sexual experimentation; create families and lead single lives; are highly religious and atheist/agnostic; serve in the military and in subversive organizations; exist in every ethnic and racial community; are conservative and liberal, Republican and Democrat. Both gender and sexual-minority students and their allies benefit from recognizing these facts as well as that which constitutes typical or “normative” development. The growing constituency of allies especially contributes to the health and resiliency of gender and sexual-minority students and includes therapists who help those struggling with their sexuality yet are too frightened to seek a "gay" therapist; educators who challenge conventional sex education curriculums; physicians who do not assume that all patients are heterosexual with heterosexual ailments or that they are simplistically male/female with masculinity and femininity issues; and legislators who ensure the safety and fair treatment of all regardless of their gender and sexual orientation and identity.

There would be less need to teach courses on gender and sexual minorities if such topics were regularly integrated into appropriate university courses. Yet, even if this material were, a need would still exist for courses that exclusively focus on their lives because they legitimate a field of study; promote scholarship and service; and assist students to develop a sense of identity, community, and history.

The task of educators is to challenge, using the best scientific inquiry, misconceptions that are all too readily embraced by the general population. The best way to challenge stereotypes is to provide multiple and consistent evidence to the contrary—through traditional academic means of study and discourse as well as reflection on personal experiences. Through this exposure students experience gender and sexual minorities as both unlike anyone who has ever lived and
just like everyone who is alive. To this end, students are encouraged to examine their fears and prejudices and to identify their reasons for embracing or rejecting these sentiments.

Although the historic struggles faced by gender and sexual minorities are not identical to those of women, ethnic/racial minorities, or other oppressed people, the profound commonalities are discussed in class. Thus, this course affords the opportunity to bridge multiple struggles of oppression, whether they are internally or externally derived.

**Code of Academic Integrity**

Each student in HD 3840 is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student’s own work. Neither shall a student assist or allow another student to submit work that is not her or his own.

Instructors must strictly enforce Cornell's Academic Integrity code. Specifically, this means monitoring student work very carefully for violations. All of the work you hand in for this class should be: 1) independently-conceived and written, and composed in your own words, not those of your sources; 2) reflective only of your own, original thinking, not a joint product of discussions with your friends in the class or written/extensively edited by your parents; 3) written for this class only; that is, you may not submit a paper (in whole or in part) you have written or are writing for another class.

The best strategy for minimizing violations is for you to understand what the university considers to be academic integrity violations. Please reread the Cornell Academic Integrity Code carefully. A list of violations can also be found in the Human Ecology Student Guide (and in the student guides for other colleges as well). The Academic Integrity Handbook can also be found on the web (http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html).

**Accommodations for Disabilities**

Students requesting academic accommodations are required to provide a Faculty Notification Letter from Student Disability Services (SDS) to the professor at least 2 weeks before accommodations are expected to begin. This letter verifies that the student is registered with SDS and specifies accommodations.

**Readings**

Because of the sweeping nature of the content for the course, rather than expecting students to purchase a litany of texts, readings for the semester will be provided as electronic PDFs through the course website. READINGS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE as the semester unfolds in order to accommodate student interests, backgrounds, and academic trajectories. All modifications to course reading assignments will occur at least one week prior to the respective lecture, and will be reflected on the course website.
Wednesday, Aug. 24
Course Overview
   Structure
   Evaluation
   Content

Monday, Aug. 29
Preamble: Cognition and Categorization
   Neurophilosophy
   “If we want to understand minds, we must understand brains.” –Patricia Churchland
   Cognition and categorization
   How cognition of categories works
   Natural categories
   When categories fail

READINGS:


Wednesday, Aug. 31; Wednesday, Sept. 7; Monday, Sept. 12
Foundations of Gender and Sex
   Sex versus gender
   Sex as categories of bodies
   Gender as categories of behavior
   Biological essentialism versus social constructionism
   Views from biological essentialism
   Views from social constructionism

READINGS:
Chapter 3: Of Molecules and Sex


Wednesday, Sept. 14; Monday, Sept. 19; Wednesday, Sept. 21
Sexual Minorities
  Sexual orientation
  Sexual identities
  Etiology
    Psychodynamic theory
    Social theories
    Biological theories – e.g., twin studies
    Prenatal development theories
    Does it matter?
Lesbians
Gays
Bisexuals
  Bisexual identity
  Stability over time
Eroticism vs. emotional attachment
Prevalence
  Kinsey vs. recent data
Queer theory and its beginnings

READINGS:


Monday, Sept. 26; Wednesday, Sept. 28
Historic Variations
  History of the gay/lesbian movement
  Before Stonewall
  After Stonewall

READINGS: TBD

[Monday October 3: Prelim #1]
Parental reactions & coping mechanisms

**READINGS:**


**Wednesday, Oct. 19**
Romantic Relationships
Nature & stability of adolescent same-sex romantic relationships
Adult romantic relationships
Parenting

**READINGS:**


**Monday, Oct. 24; Wednesday, Oct. 26**
Intersectionalities and culture: gender, sex, culture, and race
Lecture guest: TBD
Cultural Variations: Lecture guests, TBD
Ethnic and racial sexual-minorities
Negotiating multiple identities
Identity-rejecting: Men on the “down-low”

**READINGS:**

**Monday, Oct. 31; Wednesday, Nov. 2**
Gender minorities
Disambiguation: Cross dressing, Drag, Transvestite, Transgender, Transsexual, Intersex
DSM definitions and history
Etiology
Surgery
Social and political incorporation
Gender minorities and the law
Non-binary gender and culture

**READINGS:**


**[Monday November 7: Prelim #2]**

**Wednesday, Nov. 9**
Attitudes: Homophobia, Heterosexism, Transphobia
- Moral cognition
- Public opinion polls
- Who is homophobic?
- Hate crimes
- Stopping homophobia

**READINGS:**
Haidt, J. (2012). The righteous mind: Why good people are divided by politics and religion. Vintage. (*Selections*)


**Monday, Nov. 14**
HIV/AIDS
Lecture guest: Peter Staley
- A mystery virus
- GRID: Gay-related immune deficiency
- Ronald Reagan and the National Institutes of Health
- ACT UP: silence is death
- Family relationships and HIV in the 1980s

**READINGS:**


**VIDEO:**
*How To Survive A Plague*

**Wednesday, Nov. 16**
Mental Health
- Effects of harassment
Sexual orientation or sexual identity as predictor?
Case history: Suicidal youth
Teens in crisis: the LGBTQ homeless youth phenomenon in the United States
Message: Weak, strong, or ordinary?

READINGS:


Monday, Nov. 21
Critical examination of interactions between orientation, culture, and identity
In-class video and discussion: TLC’s My Husband’s Not Gay

[Monday November 28: Term papers due]

Monday, Nov. 28
Treatment
Guest lecture: TBD
Reparative and conversion therapy
“Ex-gay” movement

READINGS: TBD

Wednesday, Nov. 30
The Ongoing Quest for Global Incorporation
Lecture guest: Samantha Ames
The fight for marriage equality: a brief history
Political battlefronts in the post-marriage equality world
LGBT Rights are Human Rights
LGBTQ Human Rights abuses
Global coalitions
Feminist theology in a multicultural world
What will you do?

VIDEO:
Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s UN address on LGBT human rights (2011)

Dates to Remember

Labor Day (No class): September 5th, 2016
Fall Break: October 11th, 2016

First Prelim: October 3rd, 2016
Second Prelim: November 7th, 2016
Paper due: November 28th, 2016
**Final Exam: TBD**

**Evaluation**

Students are to complete *at least 3* of the following 4 components, each of which is worth 33.3% of the final course grade. Students are encouraged to take all 3 exams and submit a research paper; the lowest grade will be automatically dropped by the instructor.

**I. 10-Page Research Paper (33.3%)**

Students are to select a topic of interest discussed, or to be discussed, in class or appearing in the readings and write a 10-page research paper in which the topic is explored with the aid of *scientific research*. This is not an extended essay or creative writing endeavor, but rather a scientifically-informed project that incorporates the social and biological sciences.

Please remember:

1. The papers must be typed, double spaced, with 1-inch margins and in 12 point font.
2. A minimum of 10 outside sources are expected to be used and should be referenced both in the paper and at the end of the paper (section termed “References”) according to APA standards. **Internet sources are *not* permitted.**
3. Papers are due at the beginning of class on November 28th.
4. For each 3 days late, a letter grade will be subtracted from the paper.

**II. Two Prelim (non-comprehensive) Exams and a Comprehensive Final Exam (33.3% each)**

Three multiple choice exams are given. Questions are derived from lectures, videos, and the readings.

Under no condition will a make-up exam be offered.

Therefore, *I recommend that students take all three.*

Generally, grades for each exam are determined based on the top score in class as the criterion, with:

- 90% = A range
- 80% = B range
- 70% = C range
- 60% = D range
- <59% = F
NOTE: There are *no makeup exams* in this class. Rather than the instructor assessing the merit of individual requests, the above blanket rule is instated. However, to accommodate unexpected events (e.g., family deaths, varsity events, personal illness, etc.) only three of the four assessment opportunities will count toward the final grade. *I strongly recommend* that students plan to take all three exams and write the paper and thus be in a position to drop the lowest score – including one from an unplanned missed exam.