

Psychology 158: Sexual Orientation and Prejudice

Winter Quarter 2010 (CRN 59489)
Mondays & Wednesdays, 2:10 - 4:00 pm.
176 Chemistry

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Office Hours: Thursdays 3:30-5
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Information About the Course

Course Goals

This 4-unit course addresses the psychological, social, and cultural aspects of sexual orientation, with a special emphasis on understanding stigma and prejudice directed at sexual minorities (i.e., lesbians, gay men, and bisexual people). We will review current scientific theories and empirical research on sexual orientation, and will use that information to analyze contemporary controversies related to sexuality. Special emphasis will be placed on using primary sources and employing the scientific method to critically examine popular attitudes and beliefs about sexual orientation.

Prerequisites for Enrollment

1. Upper division standing in Psychology or another social or biological science
2. Successful completion of PSC 1 or a comparable introductory psychology course
3. Successful completion of PSC 41 or an equivalent course on social or behavioral science research methods.

GE Requirements and Work Load

This course fulfills General Education (GE) requirements for Social-Cultural Diversity, Writing Experience, and Topical Breadth (Social

Sciences). All students are required to complete major writing projects and several homework assignments. Extensive readings are assigned from multiple sources (books, articles and chapters, and Internet materials). ***Please carefully review the course requirements (including the reading assignments) to ensure that you can complete them. If you decide to drop the class, please do so as soon as possible so a student on the waiting list can enroll.***

Required Texts

All required books will be available in paperback at the campus bookstore, in many commercial book stores, and on the Internet. They will also be placed on reserve at Shields Library. They are:

- Bayer, R. (1987). *Homosexuality and American psychiatry: The politics of diagnosis* (2nd edition). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Chauncey, G., Jr. (2005). *Why marriage? The history shaping today's debate over gay equality* (New edition). New York: Basic Books.
- Brewer, P. R. (2007). *Value war: Public opinion and the politics of gay rights*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Additional readings will be assigned during the quarter, and will be available through the class web site. Details will be provided in class.

Class Attendance

In this course, we'll utilize a unique perspective to study phenomena that aren't generally addressed in other Psychology courses. Class meetings will include discussion of material that is not readily available in the readings or from other sources. Prof. Herek and the TAs won't be able to give you detailed explanations of material that is covered in your absence. Consequently, attending class is tremendously important. *If you know that you'll have to miss more than one class meeting, it is recommended that you not take the course this quarter.*

Course Requirements & Grading

Your course grade is based on the total number of points you earn during the quarter on exams, the term writing assignments, and homework. (Maximum possible = 100 points.)

Exams: 58 points

Two "midterm" exams and one final examination will be administered. Exam #1 will be based on all course material (readings, lectures, videos, homework) covered during the first 5 weeks of the course, and Exam #2 will cover all material from weeks 6-10. The third (final) exam will be cumulative: It will cover all material presented in the course, but in somewhat less detail than the midterms.

All exams will have the same general format, and will test both recognition (e.g., multiple choice questions) and recall (e.g., fill-in-blanks, short-answer questions) of course material.

Each exam is worth 29 points. You are required to take *two* of them. You may choose which two exams you take. If you opt to take all three exams, your course grade will be based on your two *best* exam scores (your lowest exam score will be dropped automatically). Thus, if you take both midterms and are satisfied with your scores, you need not take the final exam. If you miss either midterm (whether by choice or

because of illness, travel, an emergency, or some other reason), you *must* take the final exam to fulfill the course requirements. Because you have the option of dropping your lowest exam score, ***no make-up exams will be given for any reason.*** The exam schedule is:

Midterm #1: Wednesday, February 3

Midterm #2: Monday, March 15

Final Exam: Tuesday, March 16 (1:00 pm)

Note that if you take only one exam during the term, you'll receive a score of zero for your second exam and it will be virtually impossible for you to receive a passing grade for the course. Check your calendar now to ensure that you will be able to take at least two exams. *If you know that you'll have to miss two exams, you should not take the course this quarter.*

Homework Assignments: 12 points

Details about the homework assignments will be posted to the course website. Homework (like all assignments) must be submitted on paper, neatly laser-printed or typed. Electronic and e-mailed submissions *won't* be accepted. Homework assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date indicated. Partial credit will be awarded for late homework papers if they are submitted prior to the first midterm exam that follows the due date.

Term Writing Assignments: 30 points

This course fulfills a campus GE writing requirement. Accordingly, all students are required to two papers of approximately 1200 words (about 5 pages) each, which will be worth up to 15 points. Consistent with the GE requirement, your papers will be evaluated not only for content but also for organization, writing style, correct use of APA format, use of language, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. In addition, you'll receive comments on your first paper and will incorporate that feedback into a revised version. Some of the homework assignments are also designed to help you complete the papers. Details will be provided in class, and an explanation of the full assignment will be posted to the course website.

Final Grade

Your final grade is based on the total number of points you earn on exams, homework, and the term writing assignments. This total will be converted to a percentage by dividing it by the *adjusted total* of possible points. The percentages will be assigned letter grades as detailed below.

- A = 90-100% of adjusted total
- B = 80-89% of adjusted total
- C = 70-79% of adjusted total
- D = 60-69% of adjusted total
- F = less than 60% of adjusted total

The *adjusted total* is the total number of points earned by the highest-scoring student in the class. For example, if that student earns 95 points on exams, term writing assignments, and homework, then the adjusted total = 95. In that case, a grade of “A” would be assigned to all students who earn at least 86 points (i.e., 90% of 95), a “B” would be assigned those earning between 76 and 85 points (80-89% of 95), and so on.

Within each grade category, “plus” and “minus” grades (e.g., B-, B+) may be assigned at the end of the term, depending on the final distribution of scores.

Electronic Resources

Course E-mail

We will use e-mail frequently to communicate with you during the quarter. Ensure that your correct e-mail address is on file with the campus Registrar so you don’t miss any important announcements. Check your e-mail for messages frequently (especially during the 24 hours prior to and following each class meeting).

E-mail is also the most efficient way to contact Prof. Herek and TAs. Here are their addresses:

Prof. Herek: **GMHerek@ucdavis.edu** or **PSC158_10@Herek.net**

Aaron Norton: **ATNorton@ucdavis.edu**

Kevin McLemore: **KAMcLemore@ucdavis.edu**

Please include the phrase *PSC 158* in the Subject field of your e-mail.

Course Websites

Three websites are associated with the course.

(1) The UC Davis General Course Website features course announcements and the electronic grade book, where you can check your exam and paper scores. It also includes a link to the main course website (see below). It is linked directly to your own personalized My UC Davis page: **<http://my.ucdavis.edu>**. (Find the “My Classes” channel, then click on the link to PSC 158.) You can also find this website by clicking on the “Search For Course Webpages” link on the main *My UC Davis* page.

Check this websites at least once each week for announcements and updates.

(2) A “gateway” site provides general information about the course, as well as a link to the main course website (see below). The URL is: **<http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/Herek/courses/PSC158/psc158.htm>**

You can also get to it from the “course website” link on the UC Davis General Course Website (described above).

(3) The main course website was created by Professor Herek specifically for this course. It provides links for all course handouts, readings, and assignments, as well as other important information. The URL is:

<http://psc158.lgbstudies.org/PSC158/>

The site includes a page for each week of the course (labeled Week 1, Week 2, etc.) with handouts, deadlines, homework instructions, suggestions for further reading, useful links for the topics discussed in class that week, and other important information. These pages are updated frequently throughout the term. Please check them regularly.

Course Waiting List

Because of the nature of this course's writing requirements, as well as the classroom's limitations, the class size is strictly limited and many students are currently on the waiting list. If you are registered but decide to drop the course, please do so as soon as possible to enable someone else to be admitted. If you're on

the waiting list, you should attend class and complete the assignments during the first two weeks of the quarter so you won't have problems if you are added to the class roster.

Other Information

University Holidays

January 18 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day) and February 15 (Presidents' Day) are University holidays. Classes won't meet on those days.

Keeping Informed

You are responsible for knowing about all announcements made in class, even if you are absent when they are made. You are also responsible for knowing about all information posted to the course web site and distributed via e-mail.

Principles of Community and Class Etiquette

It is expected that all members of the class will be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Please consult UCD's Principles of Community on the web at: <http://principles.ucdavis.edu/>.

Please turn off all cell phones and personal messaging devices when you enter the classroom. This is a courtesy to the other students, the TAs, and Prof. Herek. Laptop computers may be used for taking notes, but not for activities unrelated to class. Violation of these rules may result in your being asked to leave the classroom. If you have questions or concerns regarding these policies, please discuss them with Prof. Herek.

UCD Policy on Computer Ownership

Acknowledging the importance of student computing, the University has adopted a policy concerning student computer ownership. It is explained in detail on the web:

<http://computerownership.ucdavis.edu/>

Ethical Practices and Misconduct

As in all UCD courses, students in PSC 158 are expected to conduct themselves in an honest and ethical way. It is expected that all of your work will be your own, including your answers on exams and your written assignments. All forms

of cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and academic dishonesty are considered academic misconduct and are subject to disciplinary action. You can learn more about UCD policies in this regard by consulting the web:

<http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/uwnews/aospol/uc100.html>. A link to this page is available on the course web site.

Copyright of Course Materials

All course materials are copyrighted by Professor Herek. All federal and state copyrights are reserved for all original material presented in this course through any medium, including lecture or print.

Students may audiotape lectures provided that (1) they obtain permission in advance from Prof. Herek, (2) the recordings are used exclusively by that student for study related directly to the course, and (3) the recordings are not distributed or circulated to others in any form, including posting on the Internet.

Problems, Suggestions, Criticisms, Concerns

When you have concerns about the course or problems with completing assignments or attending class, please discuss them to Professor Herek – the sooner the better. This will help to avoid end-of-term crises. And your suggestions and constructive criticisms may improve the course for everyone.