Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) Issues
In Contemporary Society

Instructor:
Email:
Office Address:
Office hours:

Course Overview and Objectives

This course provides foundation knowledge and general practice skills for working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) individuals. Students will gain knowledge of LGBTQ historical and political perspectives, the development of LGBTQ identity-formation, health, mental health and familial issues, and LGBTQ issues across the life span including the coming-out process. The intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity will be addressed along with ethical and legal issues that impact LGBTQ individuals and their families. Students will learn how to practice with LGBTQ clients in culturally relevant ways, and resources for support and information will be identified. Class will consist of lecture and student discussion.

Attitudes/Values:
• Students will reflect on ways in which the core social work values of self determination and identification, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, competence, human rights, and how scientific inquiry all apply to practice with LGBTQ clients.
• Students will examine their personal values, gaining increased self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases with respect to heterosexism and binary gender bias.
• Students will use a multidimensional, social justice, and multicultural framework to examine power, privilege, discrimination, and oppression.

Knowledge:
• Students will demonstrate comprehension, integration, and critical analysis concerning historical perspectives influencing the affirming treatment, protections, challenges, and conflicts associated with being LGBTQ in today’s society.
• Students will gain knowledge about the diversity among LGBTQ identity and the coming out process across race, ethnicity, social class, and historical period, and the relationship between sexual orientation and gender identity in diverse populations.
• Students will gain knowledge about the inter-sectionality among individual, family and institutional factors, political and social policy factors, and social and cultural factors in maintaining or achieving positive health and mental health outcomes among LGBTQ individuals.
• Students will gain knowledge and understanding of professional ethics and legalities in the context of providing value-based social work services.
• Methods of community development and community organization will be discussed in order to provide competent, culturally-sensitive, and clinically appropriate social work practice, to protect the rights of individuals and families as well as to educate and advocate for human rights and social justice.

**Skills:**
• Students will apply course knowledge to practice at the individual, family, group, institutional, or community level in class discussions and written assignments; and
• Students will learn basic skills for competent practice with LGBTQ clients, such as how to engage, integrate, and empower LGBTQ individuals and families.
• Students will demonstrate an ability to integrate theories in case studies, role-plays, and class discussions.
• Students will illustrate LGBTQ affirmation practices and provide evidence of respect for diversity and difference in class.
• Students will build a culture of inclusivity within the class and demonstrate leadership competencies by viewing themselves as learners, listening with understanding and articulating the importance of difference in shaping life’s experiences.
• Students will practice personal reflection and self-correction, applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics.

**Place of Course in the Program**

This is a survey course and an elective. There are no prerequisites. The purpose of this course is to provide the attitudes/values, knowledge, and skills as well as theoretical underpinnings to effectively serve LGBTQ individuals, families, and communities.

**The Council on Social Work Education Policy and Accreditation Standards**

The MSW Program at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). CSWE uses the 2015 Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit and reaffirm baccalaureate and master-level social programs in the United States. These accreditation standards can be reviewed at cswe.org or by accessing the link on the Rutgers School of Social Work homepage. The Rutgers University School of Social Work has integrated the nine CSWE competencies, which are in the 2015 EPAS, within its curriculum. This course will assist students in developing the following competencies:

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

**Course Learning Goals**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Identify how social forces (e.g., stigma, discrimination, and prejudice) impact the health, mental health, and social functioning of sexual and gender minority populations.
2. Apply at least two LGBTQ-affirmative interventions in their clinical work with clients.

**School-Wide Learning Goals**

Upon graduation all students will be able to:

- Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior;
- Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice; and
- Engage, Assess, and Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

**School’s Mission Statement**

The mission of the School of Social Work is to develop and disseminate knowledge through social work research, education, and training that promotes social and economic justice and strengthens individual, family, and community well-being, in this diverse and increasingly global environment of New Jersey and beyond.

**Course Assignments**

- Self-Assessments (2 @ 10 points each) 20 points
- Integration Papers (2 @ 20 points each) 40 points
- Workshop Presentation 30 points
- Class Participation 10 points

Assignments will be graded with attention to clarity of exposition, mastery of the material, accuracy of information, depth of analysis, and correct use of spelling, grammar, and sentence structure. All citations made in text must correspond to listings on the reference page, both of which must be according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition*. Late assignments will not be accepted unless previously approved by the instructor.

**Self-Assessment**

Conduct an assessment of your readiness to practice with LGBTQ+ clients. Specifically, provide an honest assessment of your attitudes/values, knowledge, and skills as they relate to LGBTQ+ populations. Provide an analysis of your strengths and limitations. *See pages 1 and 2 of the syllabus to help frame your assessment.* Your self-assessment should have an introductory statement, a section on attitudes/values, a section on knowledge, a section on skills, and a closing statement. You will not be graded on your current attitudes/values, knowledge, and skills. Instead, I am looking to see (a) what you still need to learn (or would like to learn) and (b) that you have thoughtfully assessed your current attitudes/values, knowledge, and skills. The self-assessment is due on date. Please keep this assessment. You will refer back to it at the end of the semester when you write your second self-assessment, which is due on date. For the second self-assessment, compare your attitudes/values, knowledge, and skills at the beginning of the course.
with those at the end of the course. What aspects of the course have helped to change/improve your attitudes/values, knowledge, and skills? If they have stayed the same, please explain why. Your assessments should be one single-spaced page. Use Times New Roman 12-point font and 1” margins on all sides. A cover page and abstract is not necessary. Place your name at the top. You did not need to use references for this paper.

Integration Paper Assignments

The integration paper assignments are designed to help you integrate assigned readings with class discussions and professional or personal experiences. You must write 2 of them. You are to organize your writing by describing how you would integrate the readings with your practice or discipline, whether it is clinical social work, nonprofit and public management, public policy, sociology, clinical or social psychology, or another discipline. How has the reading and class material influenced your ideas about practice, policy, or research in your area? Each paper must make substantive reference to the required readings, which can include your reactions to any of the main points made by them or questions raised by them (reactions must go beyond “I agree with…” or “I disagree with…”). You do not need to address all points made by the readings. Keep in mind that you want to demonstrate that you have carefully considered the main points of the reading assignments. These assignments do not require you to refer to readings not included on the course outline, though you may choose to do so.

Direct quotes are not allowed; in general, you should use indirect quotes (paraphrases) and must cite them appropriately. References should be cited using the publication style of the American Psychological Association. Do not cite class notes or lectures.

Your paper will be graded on its thoughtfulness, depth, application to practice, use of critical thinking in reflecting on the assigned readings, as well as the accuracy with which you use terms and concepts. Correct spelling, grammar, and sentence structure, and correct use of APA publication style are basic expectations.

Each integration paper should be 4 (minimum) to 5 pages (maximum) in length, double-spaced, using Times New Roman 12-point font (page length does not include the reference page). You do not need to include an abstract or to attach a cover or title page. The first integration paper should be based on readings from X to X. The second integration paper should be based on readings from X to X.

Due Dates:
Integration Paper One—Date
Integration Paper Two—Date
Late papers will not be accepted.

Workshop Presentation

This assignment is a presentation on any issue of concern to LGBTQ+ populations not covered in this course. Ideally, you should pick a topic that interests you either professionally or personally, about which you want to learn more. Possible topics include, bear culture, leather,
kink, crystal methadone use among urban gay men, and butch-femme dynamics in lesbian relationships. You are also permitted to choose a topic that is covered in the course but which you would like to explore in more depth, pending the instructor’s approval.

You should prepare a Power Point presentation of about 20 minutes in length, and allow 5 minutes for questions.

On the day before your presentation (before 5:00pm) you are also to submit an abstract of no more than 500 words. This abstract must include the following:

- A detailed description of the workshop content; and
- A clear statement of the workshop’s relevance to social work practice (clinical, administrative, or policy); and
- A clear statement of how this information ties in to power, privilege and dimensions of social identities, and how the knowledge gained will relate to social justice
- One or two goals of the workshop with specific skills to be obtained from participating in the workshop

In addition, you are to submit a bibliography or reference list with at least 10 references upon which your workshop draws, 2 of which connect your workshop to social justice practice. Make sure at least 3 of your references draw upon peer-reviewed research articles (quantitative or qualitative), if applicable. Discuss the links between theory, research, and practice.

It should be noted that these are the submission requirements for workshops for the New Jersey National Association of Social Workers (NASW-NJ) Annual Continuing Education Conference. It is expected that all of the presentations could potentially be expanded to 2 or 4 hours and be eligible for submission consideration—whether or not you choose to do so.

**Grading for Assignments**

Designation of letter grades will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-91</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-81</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 70</td>
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</tbody>
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A = Exceptional or outstanding work; student demonstrates full understanding of material, displays unusual analytical and/or creative ability; extremely thorough work; must be well organized and conform to accepted standards of writing including correct grammar, accurate spelling, etc.; cites material correctly. Work is completed by the due date.

B+ = Above average work in terms of understanding material and ability to apply material from lectures and readings to own proposed project. Work must be organized and conform to accepted standards of writing; cites material correctly. Work is completed by the due date.
B = Good work; demonstrates understanding of material; written materials well organized and conforms to accepted standards of grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.; cites material correctly. Work is completed by the due date.

C = Acceptable work, similar to C+ but reveals greater problems in applying the concepts and techniques to own work, fails to cover some important point(s). Some problems in organizing and presenting written materials; cites material incorrectly; too many direct quotes; fails to paraphrase and cite appropriately.

**Course Evaluation**

Rutgers University issues a survey that evaluates both the course and the instructor. This survey is completed by students toward the end of the semester, and all answers are confidential and anonymous. The instructor may also choose to conduct a mid-point evaluation.

**Academic Integrity**

All work submitted in a graduate course must be your own. It is unethical and a violation of the University’s Academic Integrity Policy to present the ideas or words of another without clearly and fully identifying the source. Inadequate citations will be construed as an attempt to misrepresent the cited material as your own. Use the APA citation style which is described in the Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition.

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be properly cited in the text or footnote. Acknowledgement is required when material from another source is stored in print, electronic, or other medium and is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one’s own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: “to paraphrase Plato’s comment…” and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. Information which is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted; however, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, only materials that contribute to one’s general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any question about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the faculty member.

Plagiarism as described in the University’s Academic Integrity Policy is as follows: “**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course. Some common examples of plagiarism are:
• Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.
• Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one’s own words another person’s written words or ideas as if they were one’s own.
• Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.
• Incorporating into one’s work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other non-textual material from other sources without proper attribution”.

Plagiarism along with any and all other violations of academic integrity by graduate and professional students will normally be penalized more severely than violations by undergraduate students. Since all violations of academic integrity by a graduate or professional student are potentially separable under the Academic Integrity Policy, faculty members should not adjudicate alleged academic integrity violations by graduate and professional students, but should refer such allegations to the appropriate Academic Integrity Facilitator (AIF) or to the Office of Student Conduct. The AIF that you should contact is Dr. Laura Curran: lacurran@ssw.rutgers.edu. The student shall be notified in writing, by email or hand delivery, of the alleged violation and of the fact that the matter has been referred to the AIF for adjudication. This notification shall be done within 10 days of identifying the alleged violation. Once the student has been notified of the allegation, the student may not drop the course or withdraw from the school until the adjudication process is complete. A TZ or incomplete grade shall be assigned until the case is resolved. For more information regarding the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures, see: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers.

To promote a strong culture of academic integrity, Rutgers has adopted the following honor pledge to be written and signed on examinations and major course assignments submitted for grading: On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination.

Writing Assistance

Success in graduate school and within the larger profession of social work depends on strong writing skills. Several resources are available to help students strengthen their professional and academic writing skills. Writing assistance is available to all MSW students as described below.

New Brunswick Campus
All MSW SSW students (NB, Camden, Newark, IW, online and blended) are eligible to access writing assistance at the New Brunswick Learning Center. Online tutoring may also be available. Contact: https://rlc.rutgers.edu/student-info/group-and-individual-academic-support/writing-coaching

Newark Campus
The Newark writing center is available for MSW students on the Newark campus by appointment. http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter
Camden Campus
The Camden learning center provides writing assistance for MSW students on the Camden campus.
http://learn.camden.rutgers.edu/writing-assistance

Disability Accommodation

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’ disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.

Office on Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance

Our school is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and our school policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, which regards sexual misconduct — including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. We understand that sexual violence can undermine students’ academic success and we encourage students who have experienced some form of sexual misconduct to talk to someone about their experience, so they can get the support they need.
Confidential support and academic advocacy are available through the Rutgers Office on Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance, 732.932.1181, http://vpva.rutgers.edu. Services are free and confidential and available 24 hours/day, 7 days a week.

Active Shooter Resources

Over the years, there has been an increase in the number of active shootings on campus. It is important that you know what to do in cases there is an active shooter on campus. Please go to this site to retrieve information that will reduce your personal risk in case of an active shooting on campus- http://rupd.rutgers.edu/shooter.php.

Class Participation

Class Discussion

As this class will be seminar style, each of you will be called upon to give your impressions of the readings and to engage in class discussions. **Please note that if you are called upon and it becomes clear that you have not done the reading assignment, you will lose points on class participation. If this happens three times, your final grade will be reduced one letter grade.**
Attendance

**You must attend each and every class on time.** Each absence will result in loss of 1 point on your class participation score. Only documented illness and death in the family is an excusable absence. Work conflicts, childcare issues, conflicts with field and other reasons for absence will not be excused. If you miss 3 or more classes, for whatever reason, you will fail the course. If you experience a personal situation that will require you to miss 3 or more classes, it is suggested that you withdraw from the course before the withdrawal deadline to avoid receiving an F on your transcript.

*Use of PDA’s*

All cell phones, iPads, iPhones, and laptops must be silenced and stored out-of-sight before class begins. **Use of cell phones is prohibited in the classroom. Texting during class will NOT be allowed.** Failure to comply with these rules (along with any rude behavior) will result in point deductions in grade for class participation and you may be asked to leave class at the instructor’s discretion.

*Course Readings*

**Required Text**


In addition, students are required to read other works from a selection of books and journals.

*Course Outline*

**UNIT 1: Identities and History**

**Week 1**  
**Introduction**

Required Readings:
- Text—Chapter 2: Understanding Differences and Definitions: From Oppression to Sexual Health and Practice (Russell & Viggiani)
- Familiarize yourself with various LGBTQ+ terminology: https://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/educated/glossary

**Week 2**  
**LGBQ+ Identities**

Required Readings:
- Text—Chapter 4: Identity Development (Argüello)
- Text—Chapter 5: The Coming Out Process (Smith, Dentato, & Argüello)
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. *Sex Roles, 68,* 754-767.

**Recommended Readings:**
LaSala, M.C. (2010). *Coming out, coming home: Helping families adjust to a gay or lesbian child.* (Chapters 1 and 5). New York, NY: Columbia University.

**Week 3 Transgender Identities**

**Required Readings:**

**Week 4 Historical Context**

**Required Readings:**
- Text—Chapter 1: A History of Community: Marching toward LGBTQ Equality (Balestrery)
- Text—See Appendix C for list of historical events

**Recommended Readings:**
UNIT 2: Key Populations and Lifespan Issues

Week 5  LGBTQ+ Youth

Required Readings:
- Text—Chapter 7: Strengths-Affirming Practice with LGBTQ Youth (Kelly & Ratliff)

Recommended Reading:
Text—Chapter 18: Building Strengths Based and Empowering Continuums of Care for LGBTQ Youth (Craig & McInroy)

Week 6  LGBTQ+ Older Adults

Required Readings:
- Text—Chapter 10: Aging within the LGBT Community: An Exploration of Life's Challenges (Spira, Orwat, & Knepler-Foss)

Week 7  Discrimination and Victimization and Its Impact on LGBTQ People

Required Readings:
- Text—Chapter 23: Understanding the Impact of Intimate Partner Violence: Trends, Frameworks, and Treatments (McLeod, Havig, Gandy-Guedes, & Natale)

Reports:
Transgender People: New York, NY: Emily Waters, Larissa Pham, Chelsea Convery.

Recommended Readings:
Text—Chapter 21: LGBTQ People of Color with Mental Health Conditions: Considering Intersectionalities (Holley & Thomas)

Week 8 Health Disparities and HIV/AIDS

Required Readings:
- Text—Chapter 24: Health Disparities, HIV/AIDS, and Framing a Public Health Agenda (Holloway & Jordan)

Reports:

UNIT 3: Clinical and Policy Practice Issues

Week 9 Practice with LGBQ+ Individuals (Part I)

Required Readings:
- Text—Chapter 12: Incorporating Minority Stress Theory into Clinical Practice with Sexual Minority Populations (Alessi & Hartman)
Recommended Reading:


Week 10  Practice with LGBQ+ Individuals (Part II)

Required Readings *(please choose at least two of the four book chapters)*:

- 1. Text—Chapter 13: Practice with the Lesbian Community (Mallinger)
- 2. Text—Chapter 15: Practice with the Bisexual Community (Scherrer & Clark)
- 3. Text—Chapter 17: Practice with the Queer Community (Wagaman)

**Recommended Readings for Additional Knowledge and Skill Building:**


Week 11  Practice with Trans and Gender Diverse Individuals

Required Readings:

- Text—Chapter 16: Practice with Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Clients (Austin)

**Highly Recommended Reading:**

Psychology: Research and Practice, 46, 21-29.

Week 12  Policy and Community Practice

Required Readings:
- Text—Chapter 19: The Intersection of Policy and Practice: Advancing Civil Rights Equality and Equity (Natale, Havig, Gandy-Guedes, & McLeod)

Recommended Reading:
Text—Chapter 3: Advancing Social and Economic Justice (Havig, Natale, McLeod, & Gandy-Guedes)

Week 13  Workshop Presentations
Week 14  Workshop Presentations
Week 15  Workshop Presentations