PSCI 3100.001, Gay and Lesbian Politics in America
Department of Political Science, University of North Texas
MTWR 8.00-9.50a, BLB 140, Syllabus, 5W2 summer 2013

Instructor Information
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Course Description
This class explores the development and the political implications of the gay and lesbian rights movement in the United States. To be sure, homosexuality has been present in this country since well before the Founding, but it did not provide the basis of a political identity until the late 1960s. In a very short time, and notwithstanding the size of the LGBT community, LGBT issues have moved from the margins to the mainstream of American political life. Our principal goal is to understand the role of this movement in pluralistic, contemporary political life in the United States.

Blackboard
A Blackboard page is maintained for this course at learn.unt.edu. Students are responsible for checking Blackboard for assignments and notices. Assignments will be submitted on Blackboard and student grades will be posted on Blackboard. Check that your grades are recorded properly.

Being in Touch
My office hours are listed above. I am available for appointments should you have a scheduling conflict. If you email me M-F, I should get back to you within 24 hours. If I don’t, please feel free to send me a reminder. A note on etiquette: 1) please sign your emails with your name, 2) please include an appropriate salutation, 3) please ask a specific question if you need a response, and 4) please include the course number (PSCI 3100) in the subject line of your message.

Required Reading

Additional readings will be available via Blackboard.

Course Outline
Organizational Meeting, July 8
• The Fundamentals of LGBT Rights (handout by Dr. DeMeritt)
• Gates, Gary G. 2011. "How many people are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender?" The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law, Los Angeles, CA.

Science, Sexuality, and Democracy, July 9, 10
The Politicization of an Identity and a Movement, July 11, 15, 16
  • In class film: Before Stonewall (1984)
  • Rimmerman, chapters 1-2

Public Attitudes on LGBT Rights, July 17, 18

LGBT Voters and Representation, July 22, 23, 24
  • In class film: The Times of Harvey Milk (1984)

State and National Policymaking, July 25, 29

Civil Equality, July 30, 31
  • In class handout on Romer v. Evans (1996)

Sexual Privacy and Marriage, August 1, 5, 6
  • Rimmerman, chapter 5
  • In class handout on United States v. Windsor (2013)

Gays in Military, August 7

Future Prospects and Review, August 8
  • Rimmerman, chapter 6

Final Examination, August 9
Grading
The course grade will be based on four components: a final examination (50%), a white paper (20%), a twitter assignment (10%), and class participation (20%).

The final exam will be in class closed book format. It will include a mixture of objective questions, short answers, and essay questions that cover all the assigned reading (whether discussed in class or not) and any other material (videos, Web presentations) covered in class. It is not necessary to bring blue books.

A white paper is a report and proposal, written to provide guidance to someone in a position of authority. The goal is to identify an issue or problem and make a persuasive argument about how the issue or problem should be addressed. Due July 29, each member of the class must write a white paper in response to one of the following hypothetical scenarios:

1) President Rawlins is trying to decide whether UNT should offer domestic partnership benefits to LGBT couples, so he requests a white paper from his staff on the topic;
2) A moderate Democrat running for the U.S. Senate from Texas asks her campaign staff for a white paper on whether she should come out in favor of same sex marriage;
3) A state is considering a law that would prohibit adoption agencies from discriminating against same sex couples. The committee of jurisdiction has asked its staff to produce a white paper on whether the law should create an exemption for religiously affiliated agencies;
4) Denton County is considering creating a domestic partnership registry, similar to the program that currently exists in Travis County. Write a white paper on this issue on behalf of one of the following organizations: Chamber of Commerce, Texas Eagle Forum, or Equality Texas.

The goal of the Twitter assignment is to encourage students to connect classroom experiences with the larger political context, using a social networking medium. Each student is required to open a twitter account. During the semester, students must make at least 10 posts to twitter based on their observations about politics and sexuality. Each tweet must: 1) include the hashtag #PSCI3100 and 2) make an observation about sexuality and politics OR ask a substantive question about class. The tweet can be an original observation or a forwarded article as long as it includes all required elements. Students are under no obligation to follow the instructor or each other. All tweets must be made by August 8 at noon.

With respect to class participation, students are expected to attend class faithfully, having completed the assigned readings, and ready to discuss the material. Not only will this benefit your participation grade, but it will help you do well on the final. Class participation will be measured by occasional pop-quizzes, which cannot be made up in case of an absence.

Students should not expect or ask for extra credit. If extra credit is offered, it is only when it can be made available to everyone in the class. Note the grading criteria, and plan accordingly for your success.

Class Policies and Conduct Expectations
Attendance and Excused Absences: Excused absences are absences that result from a verifiable, documented emergency or unavoidable legal or University obligation. Students who miss class are solely responsible for getting the notes, for all in-class announcements, and for any other consequences of non-attendance.
**Make-Up Examinations:** Make-up examinations are given at the discretion for the instructor, and only for excused absences. If for some substantial reason you cannot take your exam at the scheduled time, you should contact me prior to the due date. Students needing to miss an exam for any reason must meet with me in person outside of class to request a make-up. They must provide documentation at least one week prior to the scheduled exam. If that is not possible, students must produce documentation demonstrating the emergent nature of their absence, such as a police report or physician’s letter (not a receipt).

**Late Assignments:** All assignments should be uploaded to Blackboard by 5pm on the due date, unless otherwise noted. If for some substantial reason you cannot turn in your assignments at the scheduled time, you should contact me prior to the due date. Assignments turned in late but on the due date (day one) will only be eligible for 95% of the total points. On day two, assignments will only be eligible for 85% of the total points; on day three they will only be eligible for 75% of the total points; on day four they will only be eligible for 65% of the total points. Assignments will not be eligible for any credit if they are turned in after day four. Please note that assignments may be turned in early.

**Classroom Conduct:** All students must treat the instructor, the other students, and the classroom setting with respect. The same is true for the instructor. Therefore:

- All potentially disruptive electronic devices must be silenced. Use of laptops in class is a privilege that I extend for note taking or for in-class exercises as directed.
- Students should not send text messages, have side conversations, fall asleep, or read irrelevant materials during class. It’s impolite and distracting.
- Students should be on time and stay for the entire period.
- Please show respect for alternative opinions and points of view.
- Please note that expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums.
- The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [www.unt.edu/csrr](http://www.unt.edu/csrr).

**Exam Conduct:** During exams, please observe the following rules: (1) no caps with brims, earphones/headphones, or sunglasses; (2) you may not answer your phone or even take it out to silence it during the exam (you cannot touch your phone, period); (3) students arriving late will not be permitted to take the exam; (4) all notes must be hidden from view (if I see notes that are visible to you or another student, I will assume you are cheating).

**Religious Holidays**
In accordance with UNT Policy 15.2.5, students will be excused from class or other activities for the observance of religious holidays, for religions whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20 of the Tax Code. The student is encouraged to notify the instructor as soon as possible regarding the absence.

**Departmental Statement of ADA Compliance**
The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation.
Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

**Cheating and Plagiarism**
The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline defines cheating and plagiarism as the use of unauthorized books, notes, or otherwise securing help in a test; copying others' tests, assignments, reports, or term papers; representing the work of another as one's own; collaborating without authority with another student during an examination or in preparing academic work; or otherwise practicing scholastic dishonesty.

Normally, the minimum penalty for cheating or plagiarism is a grade of "F" in the course. In the case of graduate departmental exams, the minimum penalty shall be failure of all fields of the exam. Determination of cheating or plagiarism shall be made by the instructor in the course, or by the field faculty in the case of departmental exams.

Cases of cheating or plagiarism on graduate departmental exams, theses, or dissertations shall automatically be referred to the departmental Graduate Studies Committee. Cases of cheating or plagiarism in ordinary coursework may, at the discretion of the instructor, be referred to the Undergraduate Studies Committee in the case of undergraduate students, or the Graduate Studies Committee in the case of graduate students. These committees, acting as agents of the department Chair, shall impose further penalties, or recommend further penalties to the Dean of Students, if they determine that the case warrants it. In all cases, the Dean of Students shall be informed in writing of the case.

Students may appeal any decision under this policy by following the procedures laid down in the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.

Policies on academic dishonesty: [http://www.vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm](http://www.vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm)

**Course Drop Information:** see schedule at – [http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/schedule/scheduleclass.html](http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/schedule/scheduleclass.html)