
ANTHROPOLOGY 16: SEX AND SOCIETY (L1233)

Dr. Pruitt, Laney College, Fall 2006
dpruitt@peralta.edu, 510-464-3173

Tues 1-4pm, Room B266
Office: T506 Hours: Tu&Wed 4-5pm, Wed&Thur 11:30-12:30

This course explores sexuality and sexual identity across cultures. We will address the full range of issues relating to human sexuality, including the diverse social constructions of sexuality, gender, family and marriage, and the relationship between sexuality and religion, power, and inequality. We will also confront current issues such as pornography, prostitution, sex tourism, sex trafficking, and sex and the internet. Course material provides a broad range of information and ideas as it draws on theories from anthropology, sociology, psychology, women's studies, and queer theory. Coursework incorporates lectures, class discussions, films, and small group work. This course satisfies transfer credits: CSU Area C; IGETC Area 4

Course Outcomes:

- Knowledge of the diversity of cultural constructs of sexuality and sexual identity.
- Analyze and critique the way cultures, including American culture, socialize people to accept sex roles and sexual identities.
- Apply a holistic approach to understanding contemporary social and political issues pertaining to sexuality and gender identity.

Your attendance is necessary. Much occurs in class that is not covered in your readings. Videos will be shown in class only once and will not be available outside of the classroom. Because discussion is emphasized, preparation for each class is critical so that you can contribute and bring in your questions. We can learn a lot from each other. The more prepared you are, the more meaningful the class time will be for everyone. If you are usually quiet in discussions, make an effort to speak up. We can learn from you. If you usually talk a lot, make an effort to hold back sometimes to allow the space for others to find their voices.

Our purpose in this course is to learn about people who live differently than we do. You will need to stretch beyond your own experience and try to relate to ways of life that are unfamiliar to you. Inherent in learning about other cultures is confrontation with differing value systems and cultural practices. We will sometimes deal with topics that some might consider sensitive or uncomfortable. Our goal is to learn to understand and respect how people of different cultures define their reality - how it is that what seems strange to "us" is perfectly normal to "them." Most students find this fascinating and gratifying.

Communication: I enjoy working with students and encourage you to take advantage of my office hours. If you cannot make one of those times, we can make another appointment. If you are struggling with anything in the course it is important that you see me. You might be surprised how much it can help. You can usually reach me by phone during my office hours, or leave me a message and I will get back to you within a couple of days (not including weekends). Please speak clearly, spell your name the first time you call, indicate the day and time of your call, and the day/time of your class. Email is best reserved for short emergency communications. It is better if we talk by phone or in person for clarification of material.

IMPORTANT: It is **your responsibility to drop the course** if you cannot complete it. Non-attendance will result in an F grade.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Reading as assigned on the attached schedule: Assigned readings are to be completed **prior** to the date on the syllabus. All readings are available at the Laney Bookstore and on reserve in the Laney library.

Text: *Constructing Sexualities*, Suzanne, LaFont, Prentice Hall, 2003. ISBN # 0-13-009661-X

Key Discussant: 25%

- You will be responsible for assisting class learning in three readings/topics. Your job is to be thoroughly familiar with that day's readings, provide a short summary of important points and questions, and be a special contributor to the class discussion. These cannot be made-up after your assigned date. See below for further instruction.

Tests: 75%

- There will be three tests consisting of multiple choice, short answer and short essay questions. Each test is worth 25% of your grade. You will be given the essay questions in advance to prepare answers which you will write from memory at test time.
- Tests will cover assigned readings, class lectures and discussions, and videos.
- Study guide questions with key terms appear at the beginning of each chapter in the book. Answering these questions thoughtfully will prepare you for the exams.
- Exams are not cumulative. They include only the material covered since the prior test.
- **Come prepared for tests #1-#3 with scantron form #882-E and #2 pencils.** Scantron forms need to be in good condition in order to receive credit for the test. If the forms are creased and dirty the machine cannot read them. The machine also cannot read pen. You risk receiving a zero if you do not attend to these details.
- **Make-up tests:** You are required to take the exams on their assigned dates. Should an unforeseen emergency or illness cause you to miss the exam **AND** you notify me by voice mail **before** the time of the exam, you may take it at the scheduled make-up time. **You must make arrangements with me to do so** and to find out where it will be held. This is a serious disadvantage to you so I strongly urge you to see to it that you make the official exam time. There is no possibility to make-up any class presentations nor class exercises.

Exam #1 or #2 Nov 14 or 15

Grades are calculated on a standard 100 point scale:

90-100% = A

80-89% = B

70-79% = C

60-69% = D

< 60% = F

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LEARNING COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

Learning is challenging and requires everyone's cooperation. A positive learning environment is created by preparation, participation, and minimal distractions. Over the years of teaching at Laney I have learned that it is helpful to be explicit about what is required for creating a supportive learning community. For this reason, I have specific guidelines for my classes. Please do your part to support our success.

What you can count on from me:

1. To be here every class (barring serious illness) on time, to begin class promptly, to be prepared, and to present a well organized class, interesting and worthwhile course.
2. I will be available during posted office hours and by appointment for any questions. I enjoy meeting and helping students and encourage you to take advantage of this time. I am known to go out of my way to help students who are giving their best effort.
3. You will receive a detailed syllabus that spells out what is expected of you academically and a detailed schedule for the course so that you can plan accordingly. No surprises here :)
4. Tests will be returned the week following the test.

Overall policies:

1. **If you miss class**, it is up to you to get the information you missed from someone who was here. After you have reviewed notes from the class, you can meet with me if you have any questions concerning the material. Please don't ask me if you "missed anything important." Of course you did!
2. Any written assignments that are turned in after their due date will be marked down one letter grade for each day that it is late. I will not accept any assignments more than three days after the due date.
3. No talking during exams or you will receive a zero for that test.
4. Cheating and plagiarism are grounds for failing the course. Make sure you understand how to avoid plagiarism.
5. Extra credit is at my discretion and if available will apply to everyone. It will not sub for exams.

What is expected of you:

1. Your presence, on time, ready to work when class begins promptly at the designated hour. If you are late, wait outside until I can pause the discussion and invite you to join us.
2. Make comments and questions to the entire class - not in private conversations with neighbors.
3. Respect the opinions and experiences of others. Listen attentively and accept them as valid. Disagreements are allowed. Personal attacks are not.
4. Turn off all cell phones and other such electronic devices before entering the classroom.
5. No food in the classroom.
6. No eating (campus policy), sleeping, reading non-course related material, carrying on side conversations, or otherwise distracting the rest of us from our work.
7. Please plan ahead so that you do not have to leave the classroom during class time. No departures during exams.
8. To prevent disturbing others, please do not pack to leave before class is dismissed.
9. Heavy perfumes and colognes can cause serious problems for people with allergies and learning disabilities. Please refrain from wearing them to class.

Taking this course indicates agreement with these policies. Willful disregard for any of these policies qualifies for dismissal from the class.

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KEY DISCUSSANT GUIDELINES

Type a **1 page** summary of the reading using the following questions as guidelines.

Bring sufficient copies for your team mates and one for me.

1. List three main points from the reading:
2. Provide a one-paragraph synopsis / abstract of the reading.
(synopsis= A brief outline or general view; an abstract or a summary)
3. What did you find particularly interesting about the reading?
4. List any other readings, films, etc. related to the topic that you think we should know about.
5. List any questions you had about the readings including any terms that need clarification after you looked them up in a dictionary.

SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS

Multiple Choice:

The Trobriand Islanders view of childhood sexual activity suggests that:

- a. societies with no morals are simply not as evolved as ours and benefit from education.
- b. some cultures encourage behavior damaging to children.
- c. cultural can operate with different definitions of appropriate sexual behavior and produce happy and productive adults.
- d. sexual desire is stronger in Melanesian cultures.

Short Essay:

Discuss the view presented in your readings that science is culturally gender biased.

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HELPFUL RESOURCES IN CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

• Laney Computer Resources:

Laney Library - <http://laney.peralta.edu/library>
James Oliver Community Writing Center - E257
Technology Center - F180 Check their schedule at <http://laney.peralta.edu>, under Instructional Programs/Technology Center

• **Laney Library** - Visit your librarian. Take a research workshop.

Reference books:

Dictionary of Anthropology GN11 D48 1986
Dictionary of Concepts in Cultural Anthropology GN307 W56 1991
Dictionary of Concepts in Physical Anthropology GN50.3 S74 1991
Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology GN307 E52 1996
Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology GN307 E55 1996
Illustrated Encyclopedia of Mankind GN307 I44 1989

• **Anthropology Library - UC Berkeley**, Kroeber Hall, 2nd floor (Bancroft and College)

• Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology, UC Berkeley, Kroeber Hall, ground floor

• A few of the many valuable **internet sites**:

Cultural Survival	www.cs.org	Smithsonian Institute	www.si.edu
Native Web	www.nativeweb.org	Third World Network	twinside.org
Nativeculture.com	www.nativeculture.com		
National Museum of the American Indian	www.nmai.si.edu		

• **Information on evaluating internet resources:**

www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/college/help/critical/index.htm
<http://milton.mse.jhu.edu/research/education/practical.html>

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of using the ideas or words of another as one's own without giving credit to the source. In American society it is considered stealing and unethical, carrying heavy penalties. In this course it will result in zero for the assignment and possibly failing the course. Serious instances will be turned over to the Dean for discipline.

Do not copy someone else's work and turn it in as your own. Furthermore, anytime you borrow sentences, phrases, paragraphs, or a general train of thought, you must acknowledge the source. While plagiarism may be an intentional act to avoid doing work, it is often the result of carelessness or ignorance. **Knowing how to avoid plagiarism is your responsibility.**

For help with how to properly acknowledge the source of ideas or text from another writer go to the Laney College Library website: <http://www.peralta.cc.ca.us/laney/laney-opacs/default.htm> and click on Library Guides for help with citations and references.

It is always good to err on the side of over-acknowledgement. Be generous with recognition and help your reader know where to go for more information on that idea you found so interesting.