This lifespan course provides students with an understanding of the issues facing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) individuals, and the implications for social work practice and policy. It considers the lives of LGBTQ people from youth, through young and mid-adulthood, through the elder years. The course will examine many issues facing LGBTQ individuals, including sexual orientation and gender identity; bias, homophobia, and discrimination; family and relationship matters; health and mental health issues; and the impact of institutional and policy bias. Students will consider social work strategies to address these psychosocial challenges. Class discussion and materials will seek to promote the well-being and resiliency of LGBTQ individuals in response to social injustice. There are no prerequisites for this elective.

Upon successful completion of this course, students should have acquired an understanding of:

- Historical context for LGBTQ oppression and discrimination in the U.S.
- Distinctions between and personal meaning of sexual orientation and gender identity
- Experiences and perspectives of LGBTQ individuals through the lifespan
- Unique issues for youth, young and mid-life adults, and older adults
- Special issues in clinical social work practice
- Fostering an LGBTQ affirming atmosphere in social work organizations
- Opportunities and challenges presented by religion in society
- Current issues in law and policy

Students should remember that the School will not condone plagiarism in any form and will sanction acts of plagiarism. A student who presents someone else's work as his or her own work is stealing from the authors or persons who did the original thinking and writing. Plagiarism occurs when a student directly copies another's work without citation; when a student paraphrases major aspects of another's work without citation; and when a student combines the work of different authors into a new statement without
reference to those authors. It is also plagiarism to use the ideas and/or work of another student and present them as your own. It is not plagiarism to formulate your own presentation of an idea or concept as a reaction to someone else’s work; however, the work to which you are reacting should be discussed and appropriately cited. Any student who can be shown to have plagiarized any part of any assignment in this course will fail the course and will be referred to the Associate Dean for disciplinary action that may include expulsion.

**HIPAA ALERT**

In line with the new HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that any case information you present from your work needs to be de-identified. What this means is that any information that would allow another to identify the person needs to be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious identifiers, such as names and birth dates, but may also involve other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender is directly related to the case presentation it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Given the sensitive nature of class discussions, including the discussion of course materials, and at times revelation of personal matters, students are reminded that the same commitment to confidentiality with clients extends to classmates. What is shared in class stays in class.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations are asked to discuss their needs with the Office of Disability Services, Abby Kelsen, Wilf Campus, 646-685-0118, akelsen@yu.edu, during the first week of class. After approval for accommodations is granted, please submit your accommodations letter to your professor to discuss your needs.

**E-RESERVES (Electronic Reserve)**

Most of the articles mentioned in the curriculum are available on electronic reserve [E-RESERVES]. You can access the full text articles from your home or from a university computer at no charge.

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

This course will include readings, case studies and exercises, and experiential group exercises, as well as independent research and writing. All students are expected to keep up to date with the reading and written assignments, which will serve as a
background for class activities and assignments, and provide important background material and building blocks for each class.

**REQUIRED TEXT**

List: 43.01 ISBN-10: 0231127294

Other required readings are available via the Pollack Library’s Electronic Reserve (EReserve). Instructions/passcodes for accessing these materials will be provided separately.

**RECOMMENDED BOOKS**

List: $25.20 ISBN-10: 0231143834

List: $54.88 ISBN-10: 0789033585
Note: 3rd Edition of this book is due out in September 2017.

List: $100.95 ISBN-10: 1560235314


**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

**Format for Written Assignments**

Papers are to be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, 1 inch margins (all sides), and conform to *APA style*. Papers must draw from relevant literature from social work and other mental health, health care, and policy disciplines, and include citations and bibliography.
How you write is important. Begin with an introduction and end with a conclusion. Please use headings based on the assignment outline to organize your sections. Remember to proof read your paper. Be creative where appropriate and enjoy your experiences with these assignments.

Grading Criteria

Final grades (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C or F) will be based on:

- Quality and scholarship of papers, including integration of materials; quality of writing (correct use of spelling, grammar, and sentence structure); thoughtfulness in organizing, analyzing, and presenting materials; and promptness:
  - Mid-term: 35%
  - Final: 45%
- Quality of course participation: 20%.

Late papers may result in grade reductions of 2/3 of a point.

MID-TERM ASSIGNMENT DUE: Session 7

1. **Critical life experience or transitional period.** Identify a critical experience or transitional period in the lifespan of LGBTQ individuals. Such periods may include (but are not limited to): self-identifying as LGBT, or Q; coming out to friends, family, and/or colleagues; responding to bullying and harassment as a young person; transgender identity experiences; partnering and marriage; parenting; experiences in LGBTQ aging; becoming a care recipient as an older adult; and specific health or mental health challenges that confront LGBTQ people. Provide an overview of your selected life experience or transitional period as an introduction.

2. **Analysis.** Explain the significance of this life experience or transitional period. Analyze the professional literature on this issue. You may also integrate relevant “popular” literature and culture that further illustrates and supports your analysis.

3. **Personal Experiences.** Create a client experiencing the issues you present, and suggest interventions to support and assist them. Alternatively, you may interview a person who is comfortable sharing their experiences. (Please be respectful and non-judgmental if you interview someone for this paper. Remember not to use that person’s actual name, unless they agree to be identified in the paper.) You may either use a separate section for the personal story, or creatively integrate the personal story throughout the analysis to illustrate your points.
4. **Conclusion.** Provide a concise conclusion, bringing together the key issues and points discussed throughout your paper.

**REQUIREMENTS:** Eight (8) typed, double spaced pages, excluding references. Please use headings based on the assignment outline to organize your sections. Remember to proof read your paper. Provide a cover sheet with a full title for the paper reflecting your topic and name. Paginate your entire paper.

**References:** In your research, you are required to use a minimum of 7 sources; 5 must be from non-assigned readings from professional literature. You may additionally use assigned readings, Internet sources, media, and national newspapers (*New York Times, Washington Post, or Wall Street Journal*). You need to cite generously throughout your paper, and cite the sources of all quotes. Do *not* use web encyclopedias (such as *Wikipedia, Answers.com, About.com, etc.*). All papers must use APA style.

**FINAL ASSIGNMENT**

**DUE: Session 12**

1. **The intersection of personal, community, and policy experiences.** Lifespan issues facing the LGBTQ community often have personal, community, and policy components. For example, harassment and bullying of children and young people has personal implications for the young people involved (the person being bullied, as well as the bully) and their parents, the educational community that should address the problem, and the policymakers establishing the rules to be followed upon incidents of bullying.

   Identify a lifespan experience facing LGBTQ people that has personal, community, and policy components. Please obtain your professor’s prior approval of your topic. In a concise introduction, explain the significance of this issue, and briefly discuss how it ties together the personal, community, and policy realms.

2. **The personal experience.** How does this issue impact the personal lives of LGBTQ individuals? Use professional literature to help analyze your issue from developmental and/or clinical perspectives. Provide example(s) from recent events to illustrate your points. Examples may be obtained from the professional literature, or from national newspapers, popular periodicals, or the Internet.

3. **Community interview.** Interview a professional social worker, program planner, administrator, or policy official at a community organization serving the LGBTQ community. Find out about the client population and their service needs and issues, the programs developed to address those client needs, and the governmental policies that impact on addressing client/community needs.
4. **Presentation of community meeting.** Describe the meeting you had at an LGBTQ community organization. Who did you meet with and what do they do? Describe the client population and their service needs and issues. What programs are in place to address their client’s needs? Have they been shown to be effective? Describe the governmental policies that impact on meeting the needs of clients and the community.

5. **Policy perspective.** Place the client and community needs in the context of the broader policy environment.

   a. Identify one (1) city, state, or federal policy that impacts on the ability of your agency to serve its clients and community.
   b. Briefly summarize the governmental policy and describe how it affects clients. Please be specific and cite to policy materials describing them.
   c. Briefly advocate for one (1) policy recommendation, consistent with social work values, which would improve client services.

For example, if you interview staff at an agency serving homeless LGBTQ youth, find out about specific governmental policies that impact upon serving these young people. Obtain suggestions on policies to improve client care.

**REQUIREMENTS:** Ten (10) typed, double spaced pages, excluding references. Please use headings based on the assignment outline to organize your sections. Remember to proof read your paper. Provide a cover sheet with a full title for the paper reflecting your topic and name. Paginate your entire paper.

**References:** In your research, you are required to use a minimum of 7 sources; 5 must be from non-assigned readings from professional literature. You may additionally use assigned readings, Internet sources, media, and national newspapers (New York Times, Washington Post, or Wall Street Journal). You need to cite generously throughout your paper, and cite the sources of all quotes. Do not use web encyclopedias (such as Wikipedia, Answers.com, About.com, etc.). All papers must use APA style.
COURSE OUTLINE

Sessions 1: Introduction to Course

- Overview of course and objectives
- LGBTQ perspectives and communities
- Student interests in LGBTQ practice, studies, and experience

In-class viewing

Session 2: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity: The Context for Social Work Practice

- Distinctions between and personal meaning of sexual orientation and gender identity
- The historical context for the LGBT community in the U.S.
- Impact of oppression and discrimination
- Intersection and impact of cultural, historical, political, and family backgrounds
- Societal impact on older adult families (case example: *Gen Silent*)

Readings

From Morrow & Messinger:

D.F. Morrow, “Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Expression,” pp. 3-17

L. Messinger, “A Historical Perspective,” pp. 18-42


Session 3: Lesbian and Gay Identities

- Gay, lesbian, and bisexual identities
- Identity vs. sexual continuum
- Coming out process
- Stresses of the “closet”

Readings

From Morrow & Messinger:


Session 4: Transgender Identity and Practice Issues

- Transgender identity development
- Distinctions among gender identity, cross dressing, and intersex people
- Personal and family experiences and perspectives

Required reading


Recommended readings

From Morrow & Messinger:

J.I. Martin & D.R. Yonkin, “Transgender Identity,” pp. 105-128

A.I. Lev, “Transgender Emergence within Families,” pp. 263-283

Session 5: Childhood and Adolescence

- LGBT adolescent development
- Bullying and harassment
- Family, school, and the social context

Readings

From Morrow & Messinger:


Chapters 1 and 5


Session 6: Young and Mid-Life Adulthood

- Intimacy and relationships
- Marriage, family, and children
- Worklife
- Impact of HIV epidemic

Readings

From Morrow & Messinger:


Session 7: Evolving Lives, Evolving Relationships

- Interplay of history, culture, and family
- Evolving nature of relationships
- Self-identity through the lifespan

MID-TERM ASSIGNMENT DUE AT SESSION 7

Viewing

Guido Santi (Director) (2009), Chris and Don: A Love Story. Zeitgeist Films.
HBO Studios (2004). If These Wall Could Talk 2. HBO Studios

Readings

TBA
Session 8: Aging and Elder Care

- Retirement and aging
- Grief and bereavement
- Caregiving
- Long-term care

Readings

From Morrow & Messinger:


Executive Summary to be distributed in class


Sessions 9-10: Clinical Social Work Practice with the LGBT Community

Guest faculty will address:

- Working with LGBT individuals and couples
- Working with LGBT families
- Selected clinical issues

Readings

From Morrow & Messinger:

L. Messinger, “Toward Affirmative Practice,” pp. 460-470
Session 11: Role of Sexual Orientation within Institutions

- Institutional perspectives and bias
- Fostering an LGBT affirming atmosphere in social work organizations
- Workplace challenges
- Opportunities and challenges presented by religion

Readings

From Morrow & Messinger


Session 12: Transgender Experiences

Discussion TBA

FINAL PAPER DUE AT SESSION 12

Sessions 13-14: Impact of Law and Policy

- Sodomy laws
- Civil rights / Non-discrimination laws
- Marriage equality
- Adoption and parenting
- Hate Crimes
- Conversion Therapy

Readings

From Morrow & Messinger

M.E. Swigonski, “Violence, Hate Crimes, and Hate Language,” pp. 364-383

