



**Fall 2014  
Freshman Seminar**

**VIOLENCE AGAINST SEXUAL AND GENDER MINORITIES**

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**The Basics**

When to meet: Mondays, 5:00 - 5:50 p.m.

Where to meet: SBSG 5105 (Dean's Conference Room)

What to bring: a willingness to actively participate and your insights

Why come: to learn and earn an academic unit in the process

Where to find the instructor: Dean's Office, by appointment

How to contact the instructor: e-mail [jenness@uci.edu](mailto:jenness@uci.edu)

How to learn about the instructor: <http://www.seweb.uci.edu/users/jenness/jenness.html>

**The Topic**

Violence aimed at individuals who identify, or are perceived as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) or otherwise gender variant has been a part of the fabric of most societies historically and in the present era. This course situates violence against sexual and gender minorities in an historical context; focuses on the U.S.A. to present an overview of empirical data that reveals the contours of this type of violence in the modern era; and presents psychological, interactional, cultural, and structural perspectives on violence against LGBTQ people. We discuss empirical and theoretical literature that indicates that the patterned nature of violence against sexual and gender minorities is an outgrowth of structures and processes intimately connected to a binary sex/gender system in which heterosexuality and heterosexism are defined as normative. The course concludes by examining how, late in the twentieth century, violence against LGBTQ people garnered the attention of activists and interest groups, educators, politicians, journalists, and other stakeholders in unprecedented ways, which in turn engendered significant legislative and other mitigatory responses at the local, state, and national levels in the U.S. and other countries.

## The Requirements

There are four requirements for this course:

1. Attend every meeting of the seminar;
2. Actively participate in every meeting of the seminar;
3. Read "Violence Against Sexual and Gender Minorities," by Michael Smyth and Valerie Jenness, and a series of related articles selected by the students; and
4. Write a five page, double-spaced, paper that problematizes the literature on violence against sexual and gender minorities as presented in class. Due in class in the 10<sup>th</sup> week of the quarter.

## The Grading Policy

Course grades will be computed using the following criteria:

1. Attendance (40%)
2. Participation (30%)
3. Writing Assignments (30%)

Regular class attendance and active participation, as well as successful completion of the writing assignment on time, will earn the student an A in the seminar. If you participate and do assignments, but miss 2 classes, your grade will drop one whole letter grade. For example, if you miss 2 classes, your grade drops from an A to a B; if you miss 4 classes your grade drops to a C, etc. Note: any student who feels he/she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor to discuss his/her specific needs. Also, contact the Disability Services Center at 949-824-7494 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

## The Course Outline

The outline below indicates what we will be discussing and when we will be discussing it. Discussion topics are not chiseled in stone; all topics and dates are tentative and subject to change. If changes are made, they will be announced in class or over e-mail.

- Week 1: Introduction
- Week 2: Thinking about Violence Against Gender and Sexual Minorities
- Week 3: A History of Violence Against Sexual and Gender Minorities
- Week 4: An Empirical Portrait of Violence Against Sexual and Gender Minorities, Part I
- Week 5: An Empirical Portrait of Violence Against Sexual and Gender Minorities, Part II
- Week 6: An Empirical Portrait of Violence Against Sexual and Gender Minorities, Part III
- Week 7: Theoretical Explanations, Part I
- Week 8: Theoretical Explanations, Part II
- Week 9: Theoretical Explanations, Part III
- Week 10: Discussion and Conclusion