

ISSUES IN LESBIAN RELATIONSHIPS (GSLT 21)

City College of San Francisco, Fall 2010

Aug. 20 – Dec. 18, 2010
CRN 78899, SEC 831 (Online)
www.ccsf.edu/online/courses

Instructor: Trinity A. Ordon, Ph.D.,
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This is a completely online, weekly-paced course with readings, online postings, self-healing practices, group activity assignments and self-reflection writings. There are no classroom meetings, however, the instructor is available for individual student conferences during office hours or other times arranged by appointment. Not including the midterm and final examinations, students can expect to spend an average of 6 - 12 hrs./wk. to complete the assignments.

<i>Meets CCSF graduation requirement areas:</i>	<i>Contact: (415) 452-4895</i>
• <i>D (Social and Behavioral Sciences) and</i>	<i>Office Hours: Fridays, 12-2 PM (online)</i>
• <i>H3 (Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Studies)</i>	<i>Telephone Hours: Fridays, 12-2 PM</i>
<i>Transferable to any California State University campus</i>	<i>Other times available by appointment only</i>

SYLLABUS

(Pls. keep for reference throughout the semester)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES, BOOKS, WEEKLY SCHEDULE, COURSE REQUIREMENTS, GRADING POLICIES & DUE DATE SCHEDULE

I. LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

(NOTE: The course addresses the relationship issues and needs of lesbians. However, heterosexual, bisexual, gender queer and transgender people have found the topics also relevant and taken the class.)

This class addresses:

- A. *Personal relationships* for lesbian women, primarily to those who are new to relationships or have had difficulties sustaining a happy and successful relationship. Learning modality is self-exploration and sharing personal experiences of these issues through reading, writing, self-reflection responses, essays, interactive exercises, self-healing practices, online library work and individual research or self-reflection midterm and final papers.
- B. *Intimate partner relationship problems*, especially those expressed through conflicts with money, power (decision-making) and sex. Through readings and interactive postings, small group exercises and self-reflection activities, students identify personal relationship problems and then explore strategies for transforming unproductive patterns of behavior, communication and attitude.
- C. *Underlying issues* at the root of problematic behaviors and patterns by understanding your self and your personal gender, sexuality and relationship history and examining the impact of healthy and unhealthy experiences on your self-esteem, personal life and intimate relationship patterns.

- D. *Social, cultural, political and psychological repercussions* of racism, sexism, heterosexism and homo/bi/trans-phobia on personal relationships.
- E. *Commitment, inter-racial and intra-racial relationships* will also be explored. Optional course work is available on parenting, aging and health issues of lesbian women and its effect on intimate partner relationships.

II. BOOKS

REQUIRED (available through CCSF Bookstore or internet purchase):

1. *Lesbian Couples: A Guide to Creating Healthy Relationships*, by D. Merilee Clunis and G. Dorsey Green, Seal Press, 2005
2. *If the Buddha Dated: A Handbook For Finding Love on a Spiritual Path*, by Charlotte Kasl, Compass Press, 1999.
3. *Conversations with God: An Uncommon Dialogue, Book 1*, Neale Donald Walsh, New York: Putnam, 1996.
4. *I Thought We'd Never Speak Again: The Road from Estrangement to Reconciliation*, by Laura Davis, Harper Collins, 2002.
5. *GLST 21 Course Reader: A compilation of articles and essays*, the reader is: \$27.38 (tax included). Go to Copy Central and pick up your copy; open 7 days a week and centrally located in the Castro District. Check their website for directions and store hours (2336 Market St. off 16th St., San Francisco, CA 94114, [415] 431-6725, www.copycentral.com). **NOTE: If you are out of the San Francisco area or want it sent by mail**, contact the manager, Mr. Yuri Godwin (yruigodwin@copycentral) at the store and place your order directly. The reader will be sent by UPS ground shipping for an additional \$13 minimum expense; more for overnight, national or international delivery. Allow 3-5 days for local delivery. If you want, you may request a pdf of Weeks 1-3 reading assignments to be emailed to you while you are waiting for delivery.

RECOMMENDED (available through CCSF Bookstore or internet purchase):

1. *Peer Marriage: How Love Between Equals Really Works*, Pepper Schwartz, New York: The Free Press/Macmillan Inc., 1994. (Note: Especially recommended if you are in a relationship with a man.)
2. *The Ethical Slut: A Practical Guide to Polyamory, Open Relationships & Other Adventures [2nd Edition: Updated and Expanded]*, Dossie Easton and Janet W. Harper, Berkeley: Celestial Arts, 2009.
3. *The Whole Lesbian Sex Book: A Passionate Guide for All of Us*, Felice Newman, San Francisco: Cleis Press, 2004.

The Required Books and several copies of the Course Reader are on reserve in the Rosenberg Library, Ocean Campus and can be borrowed for 1 week at a time.

III. WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE (Classes begin on Fridays)

Wk. 1	Course orientation and requirements; faculty and student introductions; Gender/Social Roles and Socialization
Aug. 20 - 26	<i>Self-Healing Meditation: "Identifying My Relationship Issues"</i>
Wk. 2	Love, Romance, Dating & Courtship for Lesbian Women

Aug. 27 - Sep. 2	<i>D.A.R.E. (Dating and Romance for Everyone)</i>
Wk. 3	Decision-Making, Power and Difference in a Relationship
Sep. 3 - 9	<i>Self-Healing through Writing: "I've Been Here Before"</i>
Wk. 4	Money, Power and Difference in a Relationship
Sep. 10 - 16	Power & Money Role Play Exercise
Wk. 5	Commitment to Self: Singlehood, Solitude & Being Myself in Relationship(s)
Sep. 17 - 23	<i>Self-Healing Meditation: "Temple of Silence"</i>
Wk. 6	Sexual Trauma and Its Effects on Self and Relationships with Others
Sep. 24 - 30	<i>Self-Healing Meditation: "Leaving the Pain Behind"</i>
Wk. 7	Sensuality & Sexuality: Giving and Receiving with Honesty & Integrity
Oct. 1 - 7	<i>Self-Healing through Guided Imagery: "Cutting Out the Pain"</i>
	<i>Last day to submit DARE Exercise report: Thurs. Oct. 7</i>
Wk. 8	<i>Midterm Examination Week & Extra Weekend Extension</i>
Oct. 8 - 17	<i>Wk 8: Fri. Oct. 8 – Sun. Oct. 17</i>
Wk. 9	Sex for Lesbian Women
Oct. 15 - 21	<i>Self-Healing Mirror Exercise: "Learning to Love Myself"</i>
Wk. 10	Knowing My Self and Communicating with Integrity
Oct. 22 - 28	Communication Exercises
Wk. 11	Commitment to Another: Monogamy
Oct. 29 - Nov. 4	<i>Self-Healing through Writing: 4-Day Free Write and Self-Evaluation</i>
Wk. 12	Commitment to Others: Polyamory
Nov. 5 - 11	
Wk. 13	Healing a Broken Heart: Recovery & Reconciliation
Nov. 12 - 18	<i>Self-Healing Meditation: "Forgiveness and Release"</i>
Wk. 14	Cross-Cultural/Cross-Racial Relationships
Nov. 19 - 25	<i>Self-Healing Meditation: "Equanimity"</i>
Wk. 15	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday - NO CLASS</i>
Nov. 26 - Dec. 2	
Wk. 16	(Same) Intra-Cultural/Intra-Racial Relationships
Dec. 3 - 9	<i>Self-Healing Guided Meditation: "Sending Out My Signal to the Universe"</i>
Wk. 17	<i>FINALS WEEK & EXTRA WEEKEND EXTENSION</i>
Dec. 10 - 19	<i>Individual Final Reflection or Research Paper or Optional Wks. 19 & 20</i>
	<i>Last day to submit Finals: Midnight, Sun. Dec. 19</i>

OPTIONAL	For extra credit, or in place of a Final Paper
Wk. 19	Children, Family and Community
	<i>Self-Healing Meditation: "Patience & Lovingkindness"</i>
Wk. 20	Aging for Singles & Couples
	<i>Self-Healing Guided Meditation: "Growing An Open Heart"</i>

IV. COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

- A. **ATTENDANCE:** Every week, you will be expected to read the assigned articles, post answers to the questions, reply to the posting of a classmate, do the self-healing practice and post me your confidential reflections on the week's issues. In addition, there are a few special assignments (see Group Activities below, Section V-E) as well as an online library research option for extra credit, or in place of doing the Group Activities or Self-Healing Practices. Not including time to write Midterm and Final papers, you can expect to spend 6-12 hours a week on the course. **Your attendance is your weekly postings.** There is no penalty for late postings. However, each course week will be open for *only two weeks at a time and then CLOSED according to the schedule on the last page*. Therefore, if you fall behind more than two weeks, you will be dropped from the course without further notice by the end of the 15th day of absence, unless I hear from you directly as to the special circumstances of your situation and receive some assurance that you will be able to catch up on the missed work.
- B. **COURSE WEEK:** This is an 18-week paced course with the information, skills and knowledge base growing cumulatively over time. All classes begin on Friday of the week and my office hours are 12:00 – 2:00 PM on Fridays, as well. The first day of class is Fri. Aug. 20, 2010. All homework assignments are due by the end of the class week, that is, Midnight Thursday, before the Friday of the next week.

V. HOMEWORK

- A. **WEEKLY COURSE WORK:** The primary learning modality is self-exploration through reading, writing and reflection. Participation is online postings, self-healing practices and interactive exercises. Weekly reflections and certain sensitive subjects are confidential and will be posted only to me. All activities are assigned points that I use to grade and track your participation in class. There is no penalty for late postings. **However, each course week will be open for only two weeks at a time. EXCEPTION: Midterm and Finals Weeks:** I have added an extra weekend extension to these weeks, so the deadline is the following Sunday, midnight. (See deadline schedule, last page.)

OPEN-CLOSE SCHEDULE: Each course week will be open for only two weeks at a time and then CLOSED according to the schedule listed on the last page.

- B. **SELF-HEALING PRACTICES:** The weekly course includes self-reflective exercises (writing, guided imagery, affirmations, meditation) to help you identify your relationship issues and change your patterns of behavior. This is accomplished by releasing blocked emotions from past abuses, soothing emotional or physical hurts, and replacing negative mental thought patterns with affirming ones. After teaching this class for many years and working with survivors of violence and abuse, I have developed these practices to assist

class participants with the major issues discussed during that week. (The practices are explained in detail. I suggest that you read the instructions first so you know what to expect, then follow them.)

C. **GROUP ACTIVITIES:** The face-to-face class that I have been teaching for the past five years included many interactive, small group activities of 2-5 people, depending on the exercise. These group activities have proven to be very helpful, as students share their experiences, and in doing so, help others learn from them. In translating this course to the online environment, therefore, I have tried to keep the best of both worlds. The dating, communication, money/power role-play exercises will require the assistance of at least another person. Below is a list (Week and Topic) with a very brief description of the group activity. A more detailed explanation can be found in the appropriate week. The entire curriculum is open to all enrolled students so that you can read the instructions for these weeks and be prepared to participate in the required group activities.

1. **Week 2: Dating and Romance for Everyone (D.A.R.E.)** — First, everyone will choose to be a “Player” or a “Coach.” If you are a Player, select a Coach, prepare yourself, and then get out on the Dating/Romance scene (i.e. post a personal ad; take your girlfriend out on a night dance and “re-romance” her). If you are a Coach, you can form a team of your Players or work individually with each person. Explore these worlds together, then report your experiences at the *end of Week 7, no later than Midnight, Thurs. Oct. 7.*
2. **Weeks 3 & 4: Money, Decision-Making and Power** — During Weeks 3 & 4, students are required to do a role play exercises requiring 2-5 people (5 is the most effective). In a small group, you will be asked to role-play real decision-making (Wk. 3) and money (Wk. 4) problems that you have experienced in the past. You will receive feedback from your group members and have an opportunity to “try it again” while employing a different approach, based on your feedback. The group can be made up of classmates or friends. If you like, you can also do both assignments at the same time with the same group, but you must do two different exercises (money and decision-making). If you decide to do this, please post your reports separately for Wk. 3 (Decision-Making) and Wk. 4 (Money). *Since you will be asked to role play a real relationship problem, it may be appropriate that the group not include the girl/boyfriend who is the subject of the problem under discussion. On the other hand, students have also reported success in using the exercise with this person and working through the issue together.*
3. **Week 7: Sensuality and Sexuality** — You will need a friend to give each other a non-sexual hand massage. This can be a classmate or friend (*preferably not a current or past girl/boyfriend as current or past feelings may condition your experience*).

D. **ONLINE LIBRARY WORK:** Due to any number of circumstances, including personal preference, it may not be possible to do some or any of the Group Activities or Self-Healing Practices. Therefore, online library work can be done in replacement of these activities, or for extra-credit points. In Week 2, you will be asked to complete at least the CCSF Online Library Skills Workshop “B” (Finding Articles) and then do some library research as part of your online class activity. You will need your CCSF library card number to use the library. (NOTE: If you do not know your library card number, please contact me for that information. Also, if you have done the Online Library Skills Workshop for another class, or anything comparable, you can request a waiver.)

VI. PAPERS

- A. MIDTERM PAPER, 4 pg. min. (100 points) – *Due Wk. 8 no later than Midnight, Sun, Oct. 17.* Based on your goal in taking this class, write a paper (prose, poetry, essay, personal story, or series of journal entries) telling your personal relationship story as it relates to any topic discussed in class (compatibility, power, sexuality, etc.) between Wks. 1-7. NOTE: You must include references to at least *two* articles or book chapters (cite title, author, page) in your paper. *Late papers will not be accepted.*
- B. FINAL PAPER, 7 pg. min. (250 points) – *Due Week 17, no later than Midnight, Sun, Dec. 19.* Instead of a final examination, students choose one of three options (below). See online course for more details. *Late postings or papers will not be accepted.*
1. Final Self-Reflection Paper
 2. Final Research Paper
 3. Extra Credit 1 & 2 Classes (see Weeks 19 & 20, online course)

VII. GRADES and GRADING:

- A. **PASS/NO PASS GRADE OPTION:** This is a 3-unit credit course and a letter grade is the default option if you do not designate the P/NP option. Because this is a personal enrichment course, I recommend students take it for P/NP. To receive a PASS grade, you must complete at least 75% of the assigned work (“C” grade). NOTE: Each student must go online and choose the P/NP option themselves. The instructor cannot make this designation for a student. Please consult the Calendar of Instruction for the last day to designate the P/NP grade option.

To Sign Up for Pass/No Pass:

1. Log in using your social security of student ID number as your User ID and birth date (mmddyy) as your PIN
 2. Click on “Student Services and Financial Aid”
 3. Click on “Registration”
 4. If you are adding a class, click on “Add/Drop Classes” and then at the bottom of Add/Drop Class page, click on “Change Course Option”
 5. If you are already registered in the class, click on “Change Class Options”
 6. Under Grade Mode, choose “Pass/No Pass”
 7. Click on “Submit Changes”
 8. Click on “Add/Drop Courses” at bottom of page to verify
- B. **LETTER GRADE:** The readings, exercises, midterm/final examination papers and course expectations are set at the college level. All the assignments have been designated with a point value. This is both a way to grade and track your participation in the class.

In general, the point values of the course items are:

- Reading assignment/Forum posting (20 pts.) and reply (5 pts.)
- Reading assignment/Confidential post to instructor: 15 pts.
- Self-Healing Practice: 25 pts.
- Reflection: 15 pts.

Special Activities:

- D.A.R.E. Assignment: 50 pts.
- Money Quiz: 15 pts.
- Money & Power Role Play Exercise: 50 pts. each
- Hand Massage Exercise: 25 pts.

Midterm Grade: *Midterm (100 pts) and Weeks 1-7 (975 pts.) = 1,075 pts.*

- A = 1,075 pts; B = 900 pts. (85%); C = 800 pts. (75%); D = 700 pts. (65%);
F = below 550 pts. (50%)

Final Grade: *Final Paper or Wks. 18 & 19 (250 pts) and Wks. 9-16 (935 pts.) = 1,185 pts.*
Plus Midterm Points (1,075) = 2,260 Max. Total Points

- A = 2,260 pts.; B = 1,900 pts. (85%); C = 1,700 pts. (75%); D = 1,470 pts. (65%);
F = below 1,100 pts. (50%)

VIII. STUDENT-FACULTY CONTACT & MEETINGS: I check my email and course site every day during the week (M-F) except during holidays. If you have a question, post me a message and you can expect an answer within 48 hours (not including weekends). Sometimes, the answer is very involved or better suited for a Student-Faculty discussion or meeting. If so, I will request such an arrangement. Generally, I am available to meet with individual students during the course. (This is an invitation, not a requirement.) I am available on an appointment basis to meet in person on Fridays, 12:00 – 2:00PM online or telephone. An appointment at other times than Fridays can be requested. I recommend that you email or call [(415) 452-4895] to arrange a time for us to communicate. If the telephone line is busy, please leave a message with the best time to reach you and I will return your call as soon as possible.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS:

Papers: All submitted papers must be sent as a Word (.doc or .docx) document and formatted in standard essay style: double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1-inch margins and paginated. It is expected that spelling and grammar check word processing tools will be used. Therefore, points will be deducted for spelling and grammar errors.

Incomplete (“I”) Grade and Withdrawal (“W”) from Class. Because of the extraordinary and uncompensated extra time and effort it requires to individually re-open each unfinished class section and review, respond and grade student postings, *an Incomplete grade is not an option for this class.* If you fall behind more than two weeks, I recommend that you withdraw from the class. Each student is responsible to initiate their own withdrawal from class by going on-line to their student record. If you drop a class prior to the last day to drop, no notation will appear on your permanent record. If you withdraw from a class or if I drop you between the last day to drop and the last day for withdrawal, a “W” symbol will appear on your Permanent Record. However, if you stop attending class after the last day for withdrawal, I must give you a grade other than “W.” Please check the school calendar for the deadline dates. *(The “W” symbol is not be used in calculating units attempted nor for grade points, but is used in calculating units for purposes of evaluating probation and dismissal.)*

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES	DUE
1. First day of class	Fri. Aug. 20
2. Last day to Withdraw with 100% refund	Mon. Aug. 30
3. Last day to Withdraw without a “W” on your record	Thurs. Sep. 9
4. Last day to select P/NP option	Thurs. Sep. 16
5. Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class	Wk. 14 Nov. 26 - Dec. 2
6. Last day to Withdraw, with a “W” on record	Thurs. Nov. 18
7. D.A.R.E. (Dating & Romance for Everyone)	End of Wk. 7, Midnight, Thurs, Oct. 7
8. MIDTERM PAPER (100 pts.)	End of Wk. 8, Midnight, Sun. Oct. 17
9. FINAL REFLECTION/RESEARCH PAPER or EXTRA CREDIT WKS. 18 & 19 (250 points)	Midnight, Sun. Dec. 19
10. WEEKLY COURSE WORK:	Each course week will be open for <u>only two weeks</u> based on this schedule:
Wk. 1:	Fri. Aug. 20 – Thurs. Sep. 2
Wk. 2:	Fri. Aug. 27 – Thurs. Sep. 9
Wk. 3:	Fri. Sep. 3 – Thurs. Sep. 16
Wk. 4:	Fri. Sep. 10 – Thurs. Sep. 23
Wk. 5:	Fri. Sep. 17 – Thurs. Sep. 30
Wk. 6:	Fri. Sep. 23 – Thurs. Oct. 7
Wk. 7:	Fri. Oct. 1 – Thurs. Oct. 14
Wk 8:	Fri. Oct. 8 – Sun. Oct. 17: Midterm Exam Week & Extra Weekend Extension
Wk. 9:	Fri. Oct. 15 – Thurs. Oct. 28
Wk. 10:	Fri. Oct. 22– Thurs. Nov. 4
Wk. 11:	Fri. Oct. 29 – Thurs. Nov. 11
Wk. 12:	Fri. Nov. 5 – Thurs. Nov. 18
Wk. 13:	Fri. Nov. 12 – Thurs. Nov. 25
Wk. 14:	Fri. Nov. 19 – Thurs. Dec. 2
Wk. 15:	Fri. Nov. 26 – Thurs. Dec. 2 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
Wk. 16:	Fri. Dec. 3 – Thurs. Dec. 16
Wk. 17:	Fri. Dec. 10 – Sun. Dec. 19 Final Exam Week & Extra Weekend Extension