

SOCI 119 – SEXUALITY & SEXUAL IDENTITIES

Spring Quarter 2026 | MWF 2:00 – 2:50 PM | PODEM, 1A20

INSTRUCTOR Dr. Piero Weiss	CONTACT Canvas Inbox (preferred)	OFFICE HOURS Zoom (see Canvas)	SCHEDULE MWF 2:00 – 2:50 PM
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Welcome to our course! So thrilled to be spending the quarter learning and growing with you. Please read this document carefully to get a sense of what our time together will be like.



INSTRUCTOR & CONTACT

INSTRUCTOR Dr. Piero Weiss	IN-PERSON MEETING PODEM, 1A20
EMAIL Canvas Inbox (preferred) or piweiss@ucsd.edu	OFFICE HOURS Zoom (TBD, see Canvas)

► Your Professor

Pierre-Olivier Weiss (a.k.a. Piero Weiss), Ph.D., is a sociologist specializing in inequalities, discrimination, higher education, and postcolonial studies. He has been teaching sociology since 2015 across diverse institutional contexts in the United States, Europe, the Caribbean, and the Indian Ocean region. He is currently a Lecturer in the Department of Sociology at San Diego State University. He earned his Ph.D. in Sociology from Aix-Marseille University (France), where his research examined victimization and campus climate in higher education.

His research focuses on structural inequalities, racism, and discrimination in universities, school climate, disability, and diversity in comparative and international contexts. He has published extensively on discrimination in higher education and has contributed to large-scale national research projects examining inequality and unequal treatment. Notably, his investigations into discrimination include a specific focus on violence related to sexuality and sexual identities. Furthermore, his recent work explores Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives in the United States, particularly in the context of recent changes under the new federal administration. His teaching integrates quantitative and qualitative methods, emphasizing the critical analysis of social problems, institutional structures, and social change.

► Communication & Response Time

- In addition to our 3 weekly class meetings, I'll post occasional Canvas announcements, and you'll receive feedback messages in the Submission Comments section of written work you turn in. You can write back (or send an audio/video message) to us there, too!
- Office hours: via Zoom.
- Questions outside of office hours: I'm happy to take questions outside of my office hours, and I'll typically respond to your email or text message within 24 hours, six days a week. If you don't get a response after 24–36 hours, please resend!

► Course Location & Technical Support

- Our course will take place in PODEM, 1A20 and will meet on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 2 to 2:50 PM. Course materials and assignments will be located online within Canvas.
- Please contact me if you have any difficulties with accessing or logging into Canvas. This [Get started in Canvas](#) resource is helpful, too!

COURSE INFORMATION

► Catalog Description

Introduction both to the sociological study of sexuality and to sociological perspectives in gay/lesbian studies. Examines the social construction of sexual meanings, identities, movements, and controversies; the relation of sexuality to other institutions; and the intersection of sexuality with gender, class, and race.

► Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Become perceptive to the sociological perspective.
2. Explain what a social construct is and identify processes that make human sexuality a social construct.
3. Apply concepts, theories, and ideas discussed in this class to multiple socio-historical contexts and to your own biography.
4. Trust your own voice while recognizing and respecting others'.
5. See why society needs you to be you.

CONTENT WARNING & CLASS CLIMATE

Our course content and class discussions will often focus on mature, charged, and potentially challenging topics. In the study of sociology, course topics are often political and personal (e.g., racism, gender identity, religion, sexuality). Course materials and discussions might trigger strong feelings — anger, discomfort, anxiety, confusion, excitement, nervous laughter — you get the idea. The use of precise words to describe social phenomena and/or events is part of the content of this college course. Some of us will have emotional responses to the course content; some of us will have emotional responses to our peers' understanding of the content; all of us should feel responsible for creating a space that is both intellectually rigorous and respectful. Above all, be respectful (even when you strongly disagree), and be mindful of the ways that our identities position us in the classroom.

EXPECTATIONS

► UC San Diego Principles of Community

The University of California, San Diego is dedicated to learning, teaching, and serving society through education, research, and public service. Our international reputation for excellence is due in large part to the cooperative and entrepreneurial nature of the UC San Diego community. UC San Diego faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to be creative and are rewarded for individual as well as collaborative achievements.

To foster the best possible working and learning environment, UC San Diego strives to maintain a climate of fairness, cooperation, and professionalism. These principles of community are vital to the success of the University and the well-being of its constituents. UC San Diego faculty, staff, and students are expected to practice these basic principles as individuals and in groups.

- We value each member of the UC San Diego community for his or her individual and unique talents, and applaud all efforts to enhance the quality of campus life. We recognize that each individual's effort is vital to achieving the goals of the University.
- We affirm each individual's right to dignity and strive to maintain a climate of justice marked by mutual respect for each other.
- We value the cultural diversity of UC San Diego because it enriches our lives and the University. We celebrate this diversity and support respect for all cultures, by both individuals and the University as a whole.

- We are a university that adapts responsibly to cultural differences among the faculty, staff, students, and community.
- We acknowledge that our society carries historical and divisive biases based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and political beliefs. Therefore, we seek to foster understanding and tolerance among individuals and groups, and we promote awareness through education and constructive strategies for resolving conflict.
- We reject acts of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and political beliefs, and we will confront and appropriately respond to such acts.
- We affirm the right to freedom of expression at UC San Diego. We promote open expression of our individuality and our diversity within the bounds of courtesy, sensitivity, confidentiality, and respect.
- We are committed to the highest standards of civility and decency toward all. We are committed to promoting and supporting a community where all people can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of abusive or demeaning treatment.
- We are committed to the enforcement of policies that promote the fulfillment of these principles.

We represent diverse races, creeds, cultures, and social affiliations coming together for the good of the University and those communities we serve. By working together as members of the UC San Diego community, we can enhance the excellence of our institution.

These policies include but are not limited to [Academic Personnel M015 – The University of California Policy on Faculty Conduct and the Administration of Discipline](#); The University of California Personnel Policies for Staff Members and UC San Diego Implementing Procedures, Appendix II – Personnel Policies for Senior Managers; the University of California, San Diego Student Conduct Code; UC San Diego House Officer Policy and Procedure Document; and applicable university collective bargaining agreements.

► **Attendance & Participation**

Regular attendance and class participation are important parts of the learning experience and can impact student success. Research suggests that regular class attendance positively affects course grades/GPA and in fact is the strongest predictor of GPA (more than study skills, work ethic, SAT scores, and more!).

If you are sick, please don't attend! Rest and return to class when you've recovered. If you're struggling with attending our meetings for any other reason, please let me know so we can work on solutions.

► **Academic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty of any type by a student provides grounds for disciplinary action by the instructor or college. In written work, no material may be copied from another without proper quotation marks, footnotes, or appropriate documentation.

By enrolling in a course that uses Canvas, you agree that you are the person accessing and completing the work for this course and will not share your username and password with others.

Plagiarism is the act of using another person's words or ideas as if they were your own. Sources of quotations, paraphrases, and summaries must be properly documented according to APA format. This applies to all writing, including discussions.

Please read [UC San Diego's Policy on Integrity of Scholarship](#) and take the integrity pledge!

► Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) refers to the academic standards students must maintain to remain eligible for federal, state, and institutional financial aid. If you are receiving financial aid, please ensure you review the SAP requirements and the appeals process.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

No textbook purchase required! All course assignments, readings, videos, and other materials will be available in our Canvas course.

- Reliable, high-speed Internet access on a desktop or laptop computer for homework.
- VPN access for library materials (if off campus).
- Google Docs, Microsoft Word, or other software to save documents.
- Paper and pen(cil) or note-taking app to jot down thoughts or complete activities during class meetings.
- Optional but helpful: your phone/tablet/laptop for in-class work, activities, and polls.

COURSE SCHEDULE

► Spring 2026 Key Dates

EVENT	DATE
Spring Quarter begins	Wednesday, March 25
César Chávez Holiday	Friday, March 27
Instruction begins	Monday, March 30
Fifteenth day of instruction	Friday, April 17
Memorial Day observance	Monday, May 25 – NO CLASS
Instruction ends	Friday, June 5
Final Exams	Saturday – Friday, June 6–12
Spring Quarter ends	Friday, June 12

► Weekly Reading Schedule

WEEK 0 Introduction

- Read the syllabus!

WEEK 1 Investigating Sexuality [Student Introductions]

- [Bullough: "Alfred Kinsey and the Kinsey Report"](#)
- [Amanda M. Jungels and Stacy Gorman Harmon, "Large Scale Sex: Methods, Challenges, and Findings of Nationally Representative Sex Research"](#)
- [Brandt, A., M.: "Racism and Research: The Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study"](#)
- [Donnelly, Burgess, and Simonds: "Sexuality and Social Theorizing"](#)
- [Sanders, T.: "Sexing Up the Subject: Methodological Nuances in Researching the Female Sex Industry"](#)

WEEK 2 The Social Construction of Sexuality [Discussion · Journal]

- [Held, Jacob M, et al. "Are We Having Sex Now or What?" The Philosophy of Sex, Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2022.](#)
- [Davis, G.: "'Bringing Intersexy Back'? Intersexuals and Sexual Satisfaction"](#)
- [Tobin, H. J.: "The Perils and Pleasures of Sex for Trans People"](#)

- [Ward, J.: "Straight Dude Seeks Same: Mapping the Relationship between Sexual Identity, Practices, and Cultures"](#)
- [Greenberg, G.: "Gay by Choice? The Science of Sexual Identity"](#)
- [Rupp, L. J., and Taylor, V.: "Straight Girls Kissing"](#)

WEEK 3 Representing Sex [Discussion]

- [Stokes, C. E.: "Representing' in Cyberspace: Sexual Scripts, Self-Definition, and Hip Hop Culture in Black American Adolescent Girls' Home Pages"](#)
- [Han, C.: "Geisha of a Different Kind: Gay Asian Men and the Gendering of Sexual Identity"](#)
- [Escoffier, J.: "Gay-for-Pay: Straight Men and the Making of Gay Pornography"](#)
- [Erickson, L.: "Out of Line: The Sexy Femmegimp Politics of Flaunting It!"](#)
- [Sarracino, C., & Scott, K. M.: "The Porning of America"](#)
- [Costello, C. G.: "Sexuality in a Virtual World"](#)

WEEK 4 Learning About Sex [Discussion · Journal]

- [Simonds, W.: "The Death of the Stork: Sex Education Books for Children"](#)
- [Fine, M. & McClelland, S. I.: "Sexuality Education and Desire: Still Missing After All These Years"](#)
- [Schalet, A.: "Sex, Love, and Autonomy in the Teenage Sleepover"](#)
- [Hoffman, J.: "Fighting Teenage Pregnancy with MTV Stars as Exhibit A: Style Desk"](#)
- [Fafula, A. M., Miller, K. S., & Wiener, J.: "Sexual Risk and the Double Standard for African American Adolescent Women: Sexual Risk Reduction Socialization"](#)
- [Spechler: "Put Me In, Coach: Sex Lessons for Adults"](#)

WEEK 5 Sexual Bodies [Discussion]

- [Burgess, Elisabeth O. "The G-Spot and Other Mysteries." Sex Matters: The Sexuality and Society Reader, 2007.](#)
- [Darby, Robert. "The Sorcerer's Apprentice: Why Can't We Stop Circumcising Boys?" Contexts, vol. 4, no. 2, April 2005, pp. 34–39.](#)
- [Wade, L.: "The Politics of Acculturation: Female Genital Cutting"](#)
- [Loe, M.: "Fixing the Broken Male Machine"](#)
- [Braun, V.: "In Search of \(Better\) Sexual Pleasure: Female Genital 'Cosmetic' Surgery"](#)
- [Gaskin, I., M.: "The Pleasures of Childbirth"](#)
- [Manderson, L.: "Boundary Breaches: The Body, Sex, and Sexuality after Stoma Surgery"](#)

WEEK 6 Sexual Practices [Discussion · Journal]

- [Rye, B., J. & Meaney, J., M.: "The Pursuit of Sexual Pleasure"](#)
- [Fahs, B.: "Getting, Giving, Faking, Having: Orgasm and the Performance of Pleasure"](#)
- [Siebers, T.: "A Sexual Culture for Disabled People"](#)
- [Sheff, E. & Hammers, C.: "The Privilege of Perversities: Race, Class, and Education Among Polyamorists and Kinksters"](#)
- [Carrigan, M.: "There's More to Life than Sex? Difference and Commonality within the Asexual Community"](#)
- [Nash, C., J. & Bain, A.: "'Reclaiming Raunch'? Spatializing Queer Identities at Toronto Women's Bathhouse Events"](#)
- [Steinbugler, Amy C. "Visibility as Privilege and Danger: Heterosexual and Same-Sex Interracial Intimacy in the 21st Century." Sexualities, vol. 8, no. 4, October 2005, pp. 425–43.](#)

- [Weiss, Margot. "TWO BECOMING A PRACTITIONER: Self-Mastery, Social Control, and the Biopolitics of SM." Techniques of Pleasure, Duke University Press, 2020, pp. 61–100.](#)

WEEK 7 Sexual Disease [Discussion]

- [Sonfield, A.: "Secondary Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections: Treating the Couple and Community"](#)
- [Fee, E.: "Venereal Disease: Sin versus Science"](#)
- [Nack, A.: "Damaged Goods: Women Managing the Stigma of STDs"](#)
- [Tavory, I. & Swidler, A.: "Condom Use and Meaning in Rural Malawi"](#)

WEEK 8 Social Control of Sexuality [Student Presentations]

- [Mullis, J. S. & Baunach, D. M.: "The Social Control of Adult-Child Sex"](#)
- [Windsor, E. J.: "Sick Sex"](#)
- [Lepore, J.: "Birthright: A History of Planned Parenthood"](#)
- [Phillips, L.: "Deconstructing 'Down Low' Discourse: The Politics of Sexuality, Gender, Race, AIDS, and Anxiety"](#)
- [Davidson Ladly, L.: "Gay Pakistanis, Still in Shadows, Seek Acceptance"](#)
- [Kimmel, M.: "Hooking Up: Sex in Guyland"](#)
- [Gray, M. L.: "Out in the Country"](#)
- [Acosta, K.: "'How Could You Do This To Me?': How Lesbian, Bisexual, and Queer Latinas Negotiate Sexual Identities with Their Families"](#)

WEEK 9 Sexual Violence [Student Presentations]

- [Gavey, N.: "'I Wasn't Raped, but...': Revisiting Definitional Problems in Sexual Victimization"](#)
- [Edwards, K. M., Turchik, J. A., Dardis, C. M., Reynolds, N. & Gidycz, C. A.: "Rape Myths"](#)
- [Fowles: "The Fantasy of Acceptable 'Non-Consent'"](#)
- [Armstrong, E. A., Hamilton, L., & Sweeney, B.: "Sexual Assault on Campus: A Multilevel, Integrative Approach to Party Rape"](#)
- [Walker, J., Archer, J., and Davies, M.: "Effects of Rape on Men: A Descriptive Analysis"](#)
- [Nagel, J.: "Rape and War: Fighting Men and Comfort Women"](#)

WEEK 10 Commercial Sex [Student Presentations]

- [Bernstein, E.: "Sex Work for the Middle Commercial Sex"](#)
- [Moore, L. J.: "Overcome: The Money Shot in Pornography"](#)
- [Shapkina, N.: "Not for Sale: Stopping Sex Trafficking in the United States and Worldwide"](#)
- [Brents, B. G., & Hausbeck, K.: "Marketing Sex: U.S. Legal Brothels and Late Capitalist Consumption"](#)

FINALS WEEK – June 6-12 [Take-Home Final Quiz]

ASSIGNMENTS

- **Canvas Module Content:** Assigned readings, supplemental videos, podcasts, activities, and other learning materials.
- **Journal Assignments:** Some weeks you'll respond to a few questions or reflect briefly on an assigned topic in a journal assignment. These assignments will provide an opportunity to engage with the week's topics and/or relate them to personal experiences and/or observations about society.
- **Discussions:** Some weeks you'll post (with your small group or individually) to a discussion board in response to a question or prompt related to the week's topics.

- **Group Presentation:** During Weeks 8, 9, and 10, you will work in pairs (groups of 2) to deliver a 15-minute in-class presentation on a topic directly related to our course content. This assignment is an opportunity to dive deeper into a specific area of interest regarding sexuality and sexual identities, apply sociological concepts we have discussed, and lead a brief discussion with your peers. You and your partner will select a topic, conduct independent research, and present your findings to the class. Presentations should be engaging, informative, and grounded in sociological perspectives. Detailed guidelines, a grading rubric, and a sign-up sheet for presentation dates will be provided in Canvas.
- **Take-Home Final:** You'll demonstrate your engagement with/understanding of the quarter's topics by responding to several essay prompts.

EVALUATION & GRADING

In this course, EVERYONE can – and I believe will – learn, grow, and succeed! This can include earning an A grade, if that's a priority for you.

When it comes to evaluating your written work, I will always give you personalized feedback in the Submissions Comments section of Canvas.

- Each assignment has instructions on how to complete it successfully, as well as a rubric.
- If you successfully complete most or all of our assignments, you'll earn an A.
- I do NOT take off points for grammar, punctuation, word choice, etc.
- I do accept late work! (See below.)
- If you have ANY barriers to completing our assignments, just let me know!

► Assignments & Points

Type of Assignment	Number	Points Each	Total Points	% of Grade
Student Introduction	1	25	25	5%
Journal Assignments	3	20	60	13%
Discussions	6	20	120	29%
Group Presentation	1	125	125	30%
Take-Home Final	1	75	75	17%
Attendance	1	25	25	6%
TOTAL			430 points	100%

► Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Points
A+	99%+	494+
A	92 – 98%	460 – 493
A-	90 – 91%	450 – 459
B+	88 – 89%	440 – 449
B	82 – 87%	410 – 439
B-	80 – 81%	400 – 409
C+	78 – 79%	390 – 399
C	72 – 77%	360 – 389
C-	70 – 71%	350 – 359
D	60 – 69%	300 – 349
F	59% or below	≤ 299

► Late Work

Assignments for this course should be completed on time so that we are all moving through the class together. Sometimes, though, life gets in the way of learning. In unexpected situations leading to late work, please contact me to discuss a plan for success.

I do accept late work! But I don't want you to become too overwhelmed by incomplete assignments or miss out on the chance to engage with our course community around important topics, so I'll reach out if I see you're missing a lot of work.



RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT & LEARNING

There are a variety of resources available to students at UC San Diego, which are designed to address needs and enhance the student experience.

► Learning & Academic Support

- [Ask a Librarian](#) – Chat or make an appointment with a librarian to focus on your research needs.
- [Writing Hub Services](#) – One-on-one online writing tutoring and workshops on key writing topics in the Teaching + Learning Commons.
- [Supplemental Instruction](#) – Peer-assisted study sessions through the Academic Achievement Hub.
- [First Gen Student Success Coaching Program](#) – Peer mentor program providing students with information, resources, and support.
- [OASIS](#) – Intellectual and personal development support through the Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services.
- [Tutoring – Content](#) – Drop-in and online tutoring through the Academic Achievement Hub.
- [Tutoring – Learning Strategies](#) – Address learning challenges with a metacognitive approach.

► Support for Well-being & Inclusion

- [Basic Needs at UCSD](#) – Any student who has difficulty accessing sufficient food or lacks a safe and stable place to live is encouraged to contact: foodpantry@ucsd.edu | basicneeds@ucsd.edu | (858) 246-2632
- [Community & Resource Centers / Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) – Campus community centers. (858) 822-3542 | diversity@ucsd.edu
- [Counseling & Psychological Services](#) – Confidential counseling and consultations for psychiatric service and mental health programming.
- [Triton Concern Line](#) – Report students of concern: (858) 246-1111
- [Undocumented Student Services](#) – Programs and services designed to help students overcome obstacles that arise from their immigration status.
- [Office for Students with Disabilities \(OSD\)](#) – Supports students with disabilities and accessibility across campus.
- [Get Involved](#) – Student organizations, clubs, service opportunities, and many other ways to connect with others on campus.



RESPECTFUL CONDUCT & NETIQUETTE

I would like our class to be a supportive learning environment that values and builds on the richly diverse identities, perspectives, and experiences of our group. Please help me develop this environment by honoring the diverse identities of your classmates and letting your instructor know (via email, for example) if an assignment, comment, etc. makes you feel uncomfortable.

Netiquette is etiquette for the internet – in other words, it's a set of guidelines for respectful behavior in an online environment. Knowing these social rules can help you have a more rewarding quarter.

6. **Participate.** Hearing the ideas of others is helpful for you, but you must also do your part to be helpful for the group. Share your thoughts to strengthen our discussion, and don't wait until the last minute to contribute. Encourage others to participate by responding to their ideas. Be involved, but do not dominate a discussion with too many posts.
7. **Remember the human.** This common online mantra means that even though we may not be face-to-face, there is a real person behind each discussion post. Don't write something that you wouldn't feel comfortable saying in an in-person classroom setting. Discuss ideas, not people. Be kind and understanding with your classmates to keep our environment positive and productive.
8. **Help others.** We'll be working together all quarter, so let's try to be a good team. If you can help a classmate with a question, please do! Your efforts will be appreciated by both students and the instructor.
9. **Respect people's time.** Your posts should be focused, organized, and clear so that your classmates can quickly see your point and evidence. Another way to respect people's time is to look for answers before asking for help. Try to ask for help only when you truly need it.
10. **Edit and proofread before posting.** We have lots of posts to read, so yours needs to be as clear as they can be. They should be organized and written in standard English. Unfamiliar abbreviations or easily fixed misspellings may tell your readers that you don't value their time.
11. **No flaming.** "Flaming" is an angry message, often directed at another person. Personal attacks are unacceptable in the classroom, whether in-person or online. If you see a conflict developing, try to calm things down if you feel comfortable doing so. If you feel attacked, contact your instructor rather than responding to the flaming student. Everything we do in Canvas is permanent, so please think very carefully about your tone before submitting a post.

You made it to the end! Thanks! I'm looking forward to a wonderful quarter with you all.