



THE MICHAEL D. PALM CENTER

BLUEPRINTS FOR SOUND PUBLIC POLICY

Website: www.palmcenter.org

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Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Michael D. Palm Center?

The Palm Center is a research institute at the University of California, Santa Barbara that is committed to state-of-the-art social science inquiry that enhances the quality of public dialogue about critical and controversial issues. The Center's current priority, the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell Project', continues the work begun by the Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military.

When was the Michael D. Palm Center Founded?

The Center was founded in October 2006 and previously used the name The Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military (CSSMM). In 2006, CSSMM changed its name to the Michael D. Palm Center when it received a \$1 million donation from the Michael D. Palm Foundation.

Who is Michael D. Palm?

Michael D. Palm was a gifted educator, musician, athlete, business person, and advocate. Palm was also a staunch supporter of civil rights in the gay community. He died of complications from AIDS in Telluride, Colorado in August 1998. Palm's values are reflected by those of the new Center named in his honor -- intellectual curiosity and service.

Who leads the Michael D. Palm Center?

Dr. Aaron Belkin, the Director of the Center, is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He has published in the areas of civil-military relations, social science methodology, and sexuality and the armed forces. His recent studies include analyses of aerial coercion and strategic bombing, the conceptualization of coup risk, and the relationship between coup-proofing strategies and international conflict. His publications have appeared in *International Security*, *Armed Forces and Society*, the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Parameters* (the official journal of the U.S. Army War College) and elsewhere, and he has made presentations on gays in the military at the Army War College, National Defense University, Naval Postgraduate School, and U.S. Military Academy at West Point. See the "Michael D. Palm Center Staff/Board Bios" section for more information about Center leadership.

What is “don’t ask, don’t tell”?

"Don't ask, don't tell" is the U.S. military's policy governing the service of gay, lesbian and bisexual personnel in the armed forces. It requires that gay service members conceal their sexual orientation and refrain from homosexual activity at all times during their service, and it prohibits marrying or attempting to marry someone of the same sex. In turn, commanders and recruiters are not allowed to ask personnel if they are gay, and are barred from launching an investigation into someone's sexual orientation without credible evidence that a service member may be in violation of the policy.

What resources does the Michael D. Palm Center offer?

The Palm Center offers resources for research and for teaching. Documents, archives, and a research library are available on the Palm Center webpage (www.palmcenter.org). The Center also offers several grants for syllabus development and to support research projects. Part of the Center's purpose is to create, expand, and institutionalize resources for graduate students, junior, and independent scholars. The Center aims to make their resources more competitive with those that more senior colleagues often enjoy. To address the disparity the Center offers travel, development, and support grants.

Does the Michael D. Palm Center hold special events?

The Center frequently participates in events with speakers from different military and scholarly organizations and institutions such as the Naval Academy, US Air Force Academy, West Point, and the US Merchant Marine Academy. Dr. Belkin has also spoken at the US Air Force and US Naval Academies. The Center occasionally organizes panels and events featuring experts in the field.