

Southern Illinois University
SOC 490 Special Topics in Sociology of Sexuality
Fall 2010

Class Times: TR 11:00am-12:15pm (Parkinson 108)

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Overview

This course will address a range of issues related to human sexuality and the interaction between sexuality and other social processes. While the course focuses on sociological research, it will include information from other disciplines. The aim of this course is: 1) to acquaint students with relevant concepts, theories, and methods in the field of sexual studies; 2) to increase awareness of the social construction of sexuality and the ways in which the socialization process shapes sexual behavior and desire; 3) to address some of the major moral and political controversies that surround sexuality; and 4) to develop better understanding of the dark side of sexual life. Students will be asked to participate in classroom debates, to write position papers on controversial sexual issues, to demonstrate their understanding of the material through periodic examinations, to write reactions to assigned readings, and to complete in-class and out-of-class exercises.

Required Materials

1. Hyde & Delamater (2008), *Understanding Human Sexuality (10th edition)*. New York: McGraw-Hill. [UHS]
2. Moore, Davidson, Fisher (2010). *Speaking of Sexuality: Interdisciplinary Readings (3rd edition)*. New York: Oxford University Press. [SOS]
3. Selected readings available on Blackboard. [BB]

Course Requirements and Grading

1. *Exam I, Exam II, and Final Exam*. Each of the exams will be based on a synthesis of the materials covered in readings, lectures, and classroom discussions. The exams are designed for you to demonstrate what you have learned, apply concepts from the readings, lectures, films, and classroom discussions to specific questions, and extend the learning process to the tests themselves. Exams are scheduled for September 30, November 4, and December 14. The average of the four exams is worth 55% of the final grade. **(Note: Make-up exams will be permitted only for situations that are extremely serious; you must notify the instructor in advance if you need to reschedule an exam at other than the scheduled time)**
2. *Reaction papers*: You will submit two short “reaction” papers to the assigned readings. One paper will address one week’s assigned readings. The other paper will address another week’s assigned readings. You may choose to respond to readings from weeks 2, 3, 4, 5 and/or 7. Your reactions papers may include (but are not limited to) an evaluation or criticism of arguments found in the readings, suggestions for extending or modifying these arguments, an application of ideas found in the reading to analyze a specific issue of interest to you, or reflections on personal experiences touched on by the readings. Another suggestion is to comment succinctly on what you found most interesting, important, puzzling, infuriating, fundamental, etc., about the readings (include citations, page numbers, the names of authors, etc. when appropriate). There is no strict page limit on these papers, though as a rough guideline, I recommend 2-3 pages per paper. Each paper should be typewritten or word-processed, double-spaced, in standard 12-point fonts. The papers are due no later than **October 7** and will count for 10 percent of the total grade.

3. *Oral & Written Project*: Parts of seven class periods (depending on enrollment) will be devoted to classroom debates on controversial issues related to the themes that organize the course. Two groups will be responsible for presenting the opposing views. As an individual you are responsible for:

1. Meeting with the other members of the group to discuss the arguments from both sides of the controversy. Together, you must prepare two lists: a column of arguments on one side, and a column of arguments on the opposing side (just draw a line down the middle of the page to create the two columns). The assignment is due the week before your scheduled debate. Use course readings, lectures and outside materials to prepare your lists. You'll receive comments from the instructor regarding your lists before your scheduled debate. You may use the instructor's feedback to shape the arguments in debate.

2. Preparing a position paper stating your argument. This should be about 4 pages long (not including the cover sheet or reference page) and is due the day of your debate. This paper must be in your own words, and must include the argument, any hypotheses, and evidence based on the materials you marshaled to produce your two-column list (and anything else you wish to add). This position paper must *take a position on the issue, presumably the same position you are arguing in the debate*. Your paper must include a clear thesis statement, supporting evidence, and a conclusion. Your supporting evidence should include material from the course as well as outside references; do not just write a paper that is purely your opinion or your personal experience. Rather, use the paper as an opportunity to show that you have engaged the course material and other relevant information.

General formatting of in-text citations and the bibliography should follow ASA style guidelines. For more information on ASA style, you should google "ASA Style Guide" (I also encourage you to see me or someone from the SIU Writing Center if you have any questions about the mechanics of writing a "position" paper). The paper **must** contain a minimum of 5 academic references from either professional journals or books, and must follow all university rules related to academic honesty. For journal articles, consider using these search engines: *SocINDEX* and *Social Science Citation Index* (Just go to the SIU library website and click on "Databases/Find Articles"). Also consider *WorldCat*, which is useful in searching books. Common sexuality-related journals include: *Sexualities*; *Sexuality and Culture*; *Journal of Sexual Research*; *Archives of Sexual Behavior*; *Journal of Homosexuality*; *Gender & Society*; *Signs*; *Sex Roles*; *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*; *Law & Sexuality*; *Journal of History of Sexuality*; *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*; *Journal of Psychology and Human Sexuality*; *Journal of Bisexuality*; *Culture, Health, Sexuality*.

Papers must be typewritten or word processed, double spaced, and in standard 12-point fonts. Be sure to hand in a *final draft* -- that means a draft that you have revised based on the comments of either one or more of your teammates or of a consultant at the Writing Center (or both). It should contain no grammatical or typographical errors. (**Note: Written work must be submitted on time; late work will be penalized a letter grade per day from the due date**)

Plagiarism: When you copy something word for word, you must place it in quotation marks and reference it (Note: if you must quote another author, only use quotations that are essential to your argument. The use of "nonessential quotations" will result in a lower grade). If you are paraphrasing ideas in your own words, it is not necessary to use quotation marks, but you must cite the source. This should be done according to ASA guidelines (see above). If you use another author's words without citing them, you are committing plagiarism and will receive a F.

3. Presenting your position with other members of your team in class. You may bring notes on a *single* 3" by 5" note card. You may **not** read a prepared statement. Each team member will have 1-2 minutes to make an initial statement and each team will have 3 minutes to make a rebuttal statement in which you engage with the opposing teams' arguments and make counter-arguments.

You will then have to answer questions from your classmates and participate in the subsequent discussion.

Each student will prepare *one* controversy presentation and paper over the course of the semester. The most successful debates make it clear *who is on which side*, rather than simply having each participant present materials and arguments at random. Don't just make inflammatory statements in order to provoke discussion; build and support the arguments on each side of the controversy by sharpening the contrast between your two teams. Present your rival hypotheses and evidence clearly and persuasively. **(Note: Failing to present will result in a zero for this assignment)**

Your oral and written project grade will be based on the presentation, the group list, and individual position paper and is worth 25% of the final grade.

DEBATE DATES AND TOPICS:

1. Oct. 12: Has sexual freedom gone too far in this country?
2. Oct 21: Is the practice of "hooking up" empowering to young women?
3. Nov 2: Is "gender identity disorder" an appropriate psychiatric disorder?
4. Nov 9: Is sadomasochism (BD/DS) a healthy form of sexual expression?
5. Nov 18: Does sex work exploit women?
6. Nov 30: Is pornography harmful?
7. Dec 9: Should the government be allowed to mandate STD tests and vaccines?

(Note: If you are a graduate student, you must write a traditional research paper in lieu of the project described above, and make a brief presentation at the end of the course on the research. Paper topics must be approved by the instructor).

4. *Class Exercises*. From time to time, you will be asked to complete class exercises, including possibly pop quizzes. The exercises, which may take place in class or out of class, will be linked to concepts, issues, or questions drawn from the readings, class lectures, and/or film material. These exercises will serve several purposes: (1) to "jumpstart" the process of thinking sociologically during the class period; (2) to help you make sense of the reading, lecture, and/or film materials; (3) to develop students' critical thinking and writing skills; and/or (4) to help the instructor assess who is having difficulty understanding the material and/or expressing ideas in writing so that appropriate measures may be pursued. The exercises will be graded only as "complete" or "incomplete," and are worth 10% of the final grade. In addition, they will help me assess student attendance; therefore, no-make-up or late exercises will be accepted because of absence or tardiness.

5. *Attendance*. Naturally, attendance is expected and necessary in order to successfully complete this course as readings will be a supplement to and not a reiteration of lectures and class discussion. Attendance grades will consist of sporadic attendance checks. You are allowed to miss up to 4 class sessions. You will be docked 3 percentage points per class session for any additional class sessions you miss, REGARDLESS OF THE EXCUSE. **(Note: If you fail to come to class on time or leave before class is dismissed, you will be marked "absent")**

Grading Scale: *Out of 100 Percentage Points:* A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=59 and below.

Exams 1, 2, & 3 = 55%
Reaction Papers = 10%
Oral & Written Project = 25%
Class Exercises = 10%

Other Important Information

1. *Classroom Decorum*: No disruptive, distracting, or demeaning behavior will be tolerated in this class. If your *cell phone* must be on for medical, childcare, or other reasons, please set it to vibrate, not ring. *Computer laptops* are not allowed in class unless you have written permission from “Disability Support Services.”

2. *Cheating*: All SIUC policies regarding plagiarism and academic dishonesty will be upheld in this course. A grade of “0” will be recorded for all works in which you were found to have been involved in any acts of academic dishonesty. If you are not familiar with the definitions and consequences of cheating or with your rights, refer to your *Student Conduct Code*, see an academic advisor, or ask me.

3. *Grade Appeals*: Any student who believes that she or he has been graded unfairly may appeal that grade following standard university procedures. Certain procedural rights are guaranteed to all students charged with academic dishonesty who are subject to disciplinary action. These rights are outlined in the *Student Conduct Code*.

4. *Emergency Procedures*. Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on the BERT’s website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Public Safety’s website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and in the Emergency Response Guidelines pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency. Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS

Sex, Sexuality, and Other Core Concepts

WEEK 1

Aug 24-26 Course introduction.

WEEK 2

Aug 31-Sept 2 UHS: Chapters 1 (Pp. 2-3; 8-18) & 13; BB: Christina “Are we having sex now or what?”; BB: Fausto-Sterling “The Five Sexes: Why Female and Male Are Not enough”.

WEEK 3

Sept 7-9 UHS: Chapter 13; SOS: Chapters 30, 31, 33 & 34; BB: Carrier “Homosexual Behavior in Cross-Cultural Perspective”; BB: Ward “Straight Dude Seeks the Same”.

Theory, Methods, and History

WEEK 4

Sept 14-16 UHS: Chapters 1 (pp. 3-7) & 2; BB: Donnelly et al. “Sexuality and Social Theorizing”.

WEEK 5

Sept 21-23 UHS: Chapter 3; SOS: Chapters 1 & 4.

WEEK 6

Sept 28-30 UHS: Chapter 3; SOS: Chapters 1 & 4.

Sept 30: **EXAM 1**

WEEK 7

Oct 5-7

BB: Excerpts from D'Emilio & Freedman's book *Intimate Matters*; BB: Reiss & Reiss "The Stalled Sexual Revolutions of this Century"; BB: Bailey "Sexual Revolution(s)"

Oct. 5: *Debate Group One: Two-column arguments due*

Oct 7: LAST DAY TO TURN IN **REACTION PAPERS**

WEEK 8

Oct 12-14

UHS: Chapter 9;

Oct. 12: **DEBATE 1:** Has sexual freedom gone too far in this country?"

Oct. 14: *Debate Group Two: Two-column arguments due*

Sexuality, Age, Gender

WEEK 9

Oct 19-21

UHS: Chapters 9;

Oct 21: **DEBATE 2:** Is the practice of "hooking up" empowering to young women?

WEEK 10

Oct 26-28

UHS: Chapters 10 & 12;

Oct. 26: *Debate Group Three: Two-column arguments due*

WEEK 11

Nov 2-4

UHS: Chapter 12;

Nov 2: **DEBATE 3:** Is "gender identity disorder" an appropriate psychiatric disorder?

Nov. 2: *Debate Group Four: Two-column arguments due*

Nov 4: **EXAM 2**

Conflicts over Sexuality Morality

WEEK 12

Nov 9-11

UHS: Chapter 14

Nov 9: **DEBATE 4:** Is sadomasochism (BD/DS) a healthy form of sexual expression?

Nov. 9: *Debate Group Five: Two-column arguments due*

Nov 11: No class – VETERANS DAY

WEEK 13

Nov 16-18

UHS: Chapter 16;

Nov. 16: *Debate Group Six: Two-column arguments due*

Nov 18: **DEBATE 5:** Does sex work exploit women?

WEEK 14

Nov 23-25

No class – THANKSGIVING BREAK

WEEK 15

Nov 30-Dec 2

UHS: Chapters 16 & 20; BB: Seidman "Gay Marriage"

Nov 30: **DEBATE 6:** Is pornography harmful?

Dec 2: *Debate Group Seven: Two-column arguments due*

The Dark Side of Sexuality

WEEK 16

Dec 7-9 UHS: Chapters 15 & 18; BB: Boswell & Spade “Fraternities and Collegiate Rape Culture: Why are Some Fraternities More Dangerous Places for Women?”
Dec 9: **DEBATE 7**: Should the government be allowed to mandate STD tests and vaccines?

Dec 14 **FINAL EXAM** (12:50pm – 2:50pm)