

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

HEAL 325 – Health Aspects: Human Sexuality (3)
Fall 2011

DAY/TIME:	Monday 7:20 – 10:00 pm	LOCATION:	Robinson Hall B111
INSTRUCTOR	Sarah Axelson, MSW	EMAIL ADDRESS:	saxelso2@gmu.edu
OFFICE HOURS:	By appointment only	PHONE NUMBER:	703-966-9509

PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Covers biological, behavioral, and sociocultural factors in human sexual behavior.

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

1. Develop a solid basic understanding of biological, social, and psychological components of their human sexuality;
2. Form and express educated attitudes and viewpoints on several aspects of human sexuality through interpretation of readings;
3. Form and express rational and responsible decisions concerning their human sexuality and development; and
4. Write and discuss the value of human sexuality education with professional teachers as well as the community.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Crooks, B. & Baur, K. (2008). *Our Sexuality: 11th Ed.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Additional readings will be provided in class and/or posted on Blackboard.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lectures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Class and Small Group Discussions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Case Studies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Student Presentations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Required Readings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Interactive Activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recommended/Supplemental Readings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

Note: The teaching style used in this section is very interactive and includes activities during most class sessions.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of 100 possible points.

Attendance (1 pt. per class session present; automatic points for classes that are cancelled)	30 pts.
Class Participation Assignments (3 pts. each x 10 assignments)	30 pts.
Advice Columns (5 pts. each x 4 columns)	20 pts.
Contraceptive Commercials	30 pts.
Paper: Field Trip Experience	40 pts.
Midterm Exam	90 pts.
Classroom Debate	55 pts.
Final Project	125 pts.
TOTAL:	420 pts.
Optional Extra Credit Assignment	10 pts.

Your final letter grade will be calculated using the following point totals:

395 - 420 pts. or above	A (94 and above)
378 - 394 pts.	A- (90-93)
370 - 377 pts.	B+ (88-89)
353 - 369 pts.	B (84-87)
336 - 352 pts.	B- (80-83)
328 - 335 pts.	C+ (78-79)
310 - 327 pts.	C (74-77)
294 - 309 pts.	C- (70-73)
285 - 293 pts.	D+ (68-69)
268 - 284 pts.	D (64-67)
267 pts. and below	F (63 and below)

COURSE OVERVIEW/CLASS POLICIES

Class Policy: Ground Rules

This course relies, in part, on dialogue during class discussions. Since many sensitive and at times controversial subjects will be covered, it is critical that each student understand and abide by the Ground Rules below, as well as any additional ground rules agreed upon during the first class, to ensure all participants are in an environment of safety and respect.

- Everyone has the right to pass if a specific question or classroom activity makes him or her uncomfortable.
- Use “I” statements – speak from your personal experience and don’t assume others agree.
- RESPECT: This is a safe space. It is unacceptable to insult or ridicule other students.
- Step up, step back – if it is challenging for you to speak up in class, push yourself to participate at a level slightly beyond your normal comfort zone (step up); if you generally participate often in class and have been speaking up a lot, “step back” and allow someone else to share.
- “One microphone” – do not interrupt other speakers

Class Policy: Attendance

Class periods will primarily be devoted to large and small group discussions, debates, and interactive activities.

Students are expected to attend ALL classes, prepared to actively participate.

You will earn points for every class that you attend, or when you have an excused absence. Excused absences include the following:

- An anticipated absence that you notify the instructor of in writing at least 2 weeks ahead of time and that is deemed excusable.
- An absence due to a religious holiday about which you have provided notification in writing during the first two weeks of class.
- An absence due to illness IF you notify the instructor via email prior to the missed class AND you bring a doctor’s note the following class.

All other absences will be unexcused. You will not earn an attendance point when you have an unexcused absence. I understand that things come up and therefore you may decide what merits missing class and will earn/lose points accordingly.

Please come to class on time. If you must come in late, please do so quietly so as not to disrupt others. If you need to leave class early, please consult with the instructor before class. Sleeping in class is not considered an active form of participation. If you are sleeping in class, you will be asked to leave and will lose your participation point for that class session.

Class Policy: Technology in class

Cell phones must be turned off. Texting in class is distracting to other students and to the professor, and therefore will not be permitted. If you need to send a text or make a phone call, please do so before or after class.

Laptops will not be permitted unless a student has a documented need from or is assisting a student with specific, written permission from the Disability Support Services Office.

Class Policy: Standards and Sources

All written work should be typed, spell-checked, and proofread. All papers must use Times New Roman, 12-point font size, with 1-inch margins on all sides. All papers must be double-spaced. Papers that do not meet these requirements will result in a deduction in points.

All work must be original or properly cited using APA style (see *The American Psychological Association Style Manual* or another authoritative source). This means both in-text citations and a Works Cited list for all assignments that include sources. Plagiarized work from any outside source (books, articles, websites) is unacceptable and will receive a zero.

Assignment descriptions indicate the number of sources that must be cited for each assignment. All sources cited must be **reputable sources of information**. These include scholarly journal articles, government websites, and factsheets or other publications from recognized expert agencies (ex. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy). Wikipedia and other dictionaries are not considered sources.

Grading rubrics will be provided for all graded assignments.

Class Policy: Late Work

All written work is due by the start of class on the date specified. If you miss class on a day when an assignment is due, please note that the assignment **MUST** be received by the instructor via email prior to the start of the class or points will be deducted. You will lose 5% of your grade for an assignment for every day that it is late. Without a substantial, documented reason such as a prolonged hospitalization or death of a family member, no assignment will be accepted more than 1 week late. All work will be submitted via Blackboard or email.

Class Policy: Make-up Exams

Make-up exams will only be given in the case of extreme circumstances. These circumstances must be thoroughly documented.

Class Policy: Extra Credit

Students will have the ability to turn in one extra credit assignment worth a maximum of 10 pts. Additional details on the extra credit assignment will be provided on Blackboard.

Class Policy: Changes to Syllabus

The syllabus may be changed at any time throughout the semester at the discretion of the professor. Students will be informed of such changes in class and via Blackboard.

Blackboard

Blackboard will be used for posting course files and assignments and for communicating with the class. You are already “signed up” for this course on Blackboard, since it is linked to the course registration system. It is your responsibility to periodically check the course site (log in at <http://mymason.gmu.edu> using your gmU.edu address) for updates to the syllabus/readings. It is important to note that materials posted on Blackboard are likely to provide substantive support in attaining course core competencies. Thus, it is strongly recommended that students check Blackboard on a regular basis.

Adverse Weather/Class Cancellation

In the advent of inclement weather or any other emergency, follow the decision of the University. Please check the university website for any weather-related cancellations. In the event of class cancellation, students will be contacted via email about rescheduling, assignments due, etc.

Additional George Mason University Policies:

Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See <http://rht.gmu.edu>].

Class Assignments

Advice Columns (4 responses; 1-2 paragraphs each)

Throughout the semester you will play the role of an Advice Columnist. The instructor will provide a brief letter that would be submitted to a “sex and relationships expert” and you will be asked to respond to it. Your answers should suggest the possible reasons for the question and possible solutions. If you include information from reputable sources, they should be cited appropriately. It is also a good idea to provide resources where the writer can go for additional information.

Minimum number of sources required: 0 (optional)

Paper: Field Trip Experience (3-4 pages)

Students will choose a social setting or volunteer activity that they have never experienced regarding sex or sexuality. This activity must be completed between the first day of class and the day the assignment is due. This should be legal and in good taste. Social settings or activities could include working at a health clinic, teaching sex education or participating in a rally.

In the first paragraph, describe the setting. Include information about the attendees, the location/setting, the time of day of the event, etc.

In the next 1 ½ to 2 pages, analyze the experience and the messages about sexuality that were present using the model of the five circles of sexuality. You should specifically name the circles that you saw “at play” at the event, explain what specific aspects of the circle you saw, and provide examples of those aspects. Some questions you might want to consider include:

Is this activity a positive or negative representation of sexuality? Is sexual behavior overt or implied? What are women’s roles? What are men’s roles? Are there differences in the treatment of men and women? What does this convey? Are women and men undertaking gender-stereotypical tasks?

In the next 1-2 pages, reflect on how the experience affected you personally. Think beyond what you physically saw or experienced and write about how you felt at the event. Analyze how your background, family values, cultural beliefs, etc. had an impact on your feelings in and interpretation of the space that you were in. Some questions to consider include:

What particular feelings were you experiencing while at the event? What do you think caused you to feel that way? What differences do you think exist between your perspective and those regularly in that space or attending that event?

Finally, in the last paragraph, reflect on how your participation in this new setting has changed your perspective. What effect will attending this event have on your perspectives on sexuality as you move forward in this course or in your personal life?

Minimum number of sources required: 1 (Circles of Sexuality)

Contraceptive Commercials

You are a group of ad executives who have been hired by Planned Parenthood to design commercials targeted to 18-26 year olds for different birth control/STD prevention methods. You will be assigned to teams of 5 and to one of the following contraceptive methods.

1. IUD
2. Implanon
3. Ring
4. Patch
5. Pill
6. Female Condoms

You should write a commercial that is no more than 2 minutes in length. You have the option to record the commercial using a video camera, so long as the video can be played in class using a computer. If you choose this method, please note that you must have a signed release form (copies will be available on Blackboard) for all actors shown in your commercial. You may also choose to perform the commercial in front of the class on the day that contraceptive methods are covered (indicated in the calendar). You may use props, costumes, etc. to make your commercial as interesting and eye-catching as possible.

You should include information on:

- the type of method (barrier, hormonal, etc.)
- where you can get the method/how it is administered
- what it protects against (pregnancy, STIs, etc.)
- effectiveness rates (perfect use and typical use)
- characteristics of those people for whom this particular method might be a good fit
- where to go to get more information

Group members may decide how to split up the roles within each group. Group members will all receive the same group grade for your commercial. Each group should turn in a list of the sources they used (in APA format) at the beginning of their presentation.

Minimum number of sources required: 2

Midterm Exam:

There will be a midterm exam that may contain any variety of questions including multiple choice, true/false, matching, fill-in the blank, short answer, and critical-thinking essays. This exam will cover everything we have learned up to the day of midterm including information from class discussions and assigned readings. A brief study guide outlining general topic areas for the exam will be provided and a mandatory in-class review session will be held prior to the exam.

Classroom Debate:

We will dedicate a portion of several classes during the second half of the semester to debates about controversial issues related to sexuality. During the first half of the semester, students will be assigned a debate topic, team, and date. Each team will have three members: one person will present a neutral, historical background on the issue; the second person will argue in support of the issue; and the third person will oppose the issue. Students providing background should include at least 3 relevant events/dates that provide a better understanding of the history and context of the issue. Students arguing for and against the issue should each include 3 clear, distinguishable arguments and supporting information for their respective sides.

Groups will have 20 minutes total for their presentations. Students should take approximately 6 minutes each for their respective sections, and should allow 2 minutes for questions at the end. Each student must **verbally cite at least 3 reputable sources** (see information above on reputable sources) during their portion of the debate.

Each team member will be graded on his or her individual portion of the group presentation. In addition, debate partners will have an opportunity to grade their partners on their work and effort. This will be completed individually and submitted via email by the due date indicated on the calendar.

Students are encouraged to be creative and think about how to keep their fellow students interested and engaged. Debates should critically examine the issue being presented and should expand the knowledge of other students in the class. Presentations must keep in mind the ground rules established in the beginning of the semester and should be in good taste. If you are not sure what that means, please speak to me.

Minimum number of sources required: 3

Final Assignment (8-15 pages):

Students will select one of the following final assignments:

- Unit plan (consisting of 5 lesson plans)
- Professional Development Training (consisting of 5 workshops)

Option #1: Unit Plan for a Sexual Health Curriculum

For this assignment, students are expected to create five separate lesson plans within a sexual health unit. Lessons should be structured for a school-based setting (i.e. 45 – 90 minutes in length, depending on class scheduling & grade level). Students will provide an overall description of the target audience, rationale, learning objectives, and materials list, as well as 5 scripted lesson plans (template available on Blackboard). The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate what you have learned in the course by “teaching” that information to others. Your lesson plans should be age appropriate (recognizing the developmental needs as well as the learning styles) for the selected age or grade level. The five lessons within the unit should focus on the most valuable sexual health messages (in your opinion) for the identified audience and should demonstrate what you have learned throughout this course. These lessons could comprise an entire unit, or be part of a larger sexual health curriculum.

Option #2: Professional Development Training

For this assignment, students are expected to design a professional training for a select group of adult learners. The training should be two days and include appropriate content topics for adults serving youth in some capacity (i.e. medical providers, case managers, social workers, school counselors, foster parents, etc.). Students will provide an overall description of the target audience, rationale, training objectives, and materials list, as well as a facilitated script for the training, including 5 individual workshops. The training should focus on meeting the sexual health needs of youth and should demonstrate what you have learned throughout the course. (Template available on Blackboard.)

Minimum number of sources required: 4

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	MATERIAL	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
Aug. 29	Introduction to Class What is Sexuality?	
Sept. 5 NO CLASS – FEDERAL HOLIDAY		
Sept. 12	Behind the Fig Leaf: Male and Female Anatomy and Physiology	<p><i>Class Participation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ One paragraph: List three personal values related to sexuality & their origins ✓ List all class topics in relation to sexual anatomy and physiology (1-2 sentences each) <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crooks and Baur: Chapter 3 ✓ Crooks and Baur: Chapter 4 <p><i>If applicable:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Letter from Disability Student Support Services Office ✓ Excused absences for religious holidays
Sept. 19	Ooo la la: Sexual Response	<p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crooks and Baur: Chapter 6
Sept. 26	Let’s Talk about Sex...Communication The Formation of Gender Roles and Identity	<p><i>Assignment: Advice Column #1</i></p> <p><i>Class Participation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ One to two paragraphs: What are the easiest sexuality topics to discuss with a partner? What are the hardest? Why? ✓ One paragraph: Reflect on the reading. Do you think it’s fair for parents not to identify the sex and gender of their child at birth? Why or why not? <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crooks and Baur: Chapter 5 ✓ “Parents keep child’s gender a secret” Available at: http://www.parentcentral.ca/parent/babiespregnancy/babies/article/995112
Oct. 3	LGBTQ & A: Panel on Sexual Orientation and Identity Sexual Orientation and Sexual Identity	<p><i>Assignment: Field Trip Experience Paper</i></p> <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crooks and Baur: Chapter 9 ✓ “2009 National School Climate Survey: Nearly 9 out of 10 LGBT Students Experience Harassment in School” Available at: http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/library/record/2624.html?state=research&type=research
Oct. 11 *Note: Oct. 10 class	Defining Intimacy Sexual Behavior It’s not just on MTV: Conception, Pregnancy and	<p><i>Assignment: Advice Column #2</i></p> <p><i>Class Participation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ One to two paragraphs: What is Intimacy? What is sexuality?

cancelled due to holiday; class meets Tuesday	Labor & Delivery	<p>Why do you define them that way?</p> <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crooks and Baur: Chapter 11 (pgs. 313-320 & 329-343) ✓ “Are we having sex now or what?” Available at: http://www.gretachristina.com/arewe.html
Oct. 17	Patches and Pills and Rings, Oh My! Methods of Contraception Fun with Condoms	<p>Assignment: Contraceptive Commercials</p> <p><i>Class Participation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Condom Hunt Worksheet <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crooks and Baur: Chapter 10 ✓ “The Pill at 50: Freedom, Sex, and Paradox” Available at: http://www.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,1983712,00.html
Oct. 24	STI/STDs...what’s the diff? Living with HIV	<p><i>Class Participation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1-2 paragraphs: What do you think are the most common characteristics of women getting abortions in 2011? <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crooks and Baur: Chapter 15 ✓ “Adolescents and STIs” Available at: http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/storage/advfy/documents/theadfacts_adolescents_sti.pdf ✓ “Understanding Disparities in the HIV Epidemic” Available at: http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/storage/advfy/documents/hivdisparities.pdf
Oct. 31	Abortion: The Facts and Feelings	<p>Assignment: Advice Column #3</p> <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crooks and Baur: Chapter 11 (pgs. 320-329) ✓ “Abortion and Mental Health” Available at: http://www.guttmacher.org/media/evidencecheck/2010/10/06/Advisory-Abortion-Mental-Health.pdf
Oct. 7	Midterm Exam Review CLASS DEBATES (4)	<p><i>Class Participation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ One to two paragraphs: Reaction to “No Easy Decision”
Nov. 14	MIDTERM EXAM	
Nov. 21	Sexual Violence: Power in Relationships Sexual Violence: Consent and Crossing the Line	<p><i>Class Participation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Two paragraphs: Reflect on a time when you felt powerless in a relationship, and a time when you felt powerful in a relationship. What factors influenced those feelings? <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crooks and Baur: Chapter 17 ✓ “A New Kind of Date Rape” Available at: http://www.cosmopolitan.com/sex-love/tips-moves/new-kind-of-date-rape

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “An Old Enemy in a New Outfit: How Date Rape Became Gray Rape and Why it Matters” (BB)
Nov. 28	Sex for Sale CLASS DEBATES (4)	<p><i>Assignment: Advice Column #4</i></p> <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crooks and Baur: Chapter 18
Dec. 5	16 and Pregnant: Sexuality and the Media Reproduction Plan Wrap up and Closing	<p><i>FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE</i></p> <p><i>Class Participation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Debate Partner Grades <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “Evaluating the Impact of MTV’s <i>16 and Pregnant</i>” Available at: http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/pdf/SS/SS45_16andPregnant.pdf ✓ “In Defense of Going Wild or: How I Stopped Worrying and Learned to Love Pleasure (and how you can, too)” (BB) ✓ “Sex Matters: Future Visions for a Sex-Positive Society” (BB)

